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ABSTRACT

A study examined the influences that family, community, and work exert on the youth-to-adulthood transition as well as the dynamics of their interaction. Similarities and differences among the youth-to-adulthood transition as it occurs in the United States, Japan, and West Germany were identified. It was concluded that the links among family, community, and work have weakened over time in the United States, that they have become less supportive of each other and more competitive, and that they are not as effective in promoting socialization to satisfying and productive adult roles for the present and the foreseeable future as they are in West Germany and Japan. Several things can, however, be done to help slow these trends and facilitate youths' transition to adulthood. One step is to empower parents. Efforts should be undertaken to increase parents' involvement in the governance of secondary schools, help parents and teachers learn to communicate with each other more effectively, and continue to experiment with school innovations that allow parents and youth to work together to select those types of secondary school program options that they deem most compatible. Second, the socialization functions of communities and of the workplace should be taken seriously, and explicit plans to strengthen them should be developed. (This paper includes commentaries by Paul Riesman and John U. Ogbu.) (MN)

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The Interaction of Family, Community, and Work in the Socialization of Youth

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Youth and America's Future:
The William T. Grant Foundation
Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship

YOUTH AND AMERICA'S FUTURE:

THE WILLIAM T. GRANT FOUNDATION COMMISSION ON WORK, FAMILY AND CITIZENSHIP

When William Thomas Grant established the Grant Foundation in 1936, he sought a better understanding of the ways in which individuals adapt to the vicissitudes of life. Touched in his professional life by the importance of good human relationships, Mr. Grant wished to "help children develop what is in them" so they would better "enjoy all the good things the world has to offer them."

Fifty years later, recognizing the special needs of older adolescents in our changing society, the Foundation's Trustees established **Youth and America's Future** with much the same purpose; its charge is to evaluate current knowledge, stimulate new ideas, increase communication among researchers, practitioners and policymakers, and, thus, to help our nation chart a better future for youth.

The Foundation's President, Robert J. Haggerty, M.D., has described the Commission's unique perspective:

"Against a rising chorus of legitimate concern about the many problems facing today's youth, the Foundation has initiated this Commission on Youth and America's Future to speak in a different voice. It will explore the strengths of America's young men and women, their famlilies and the programs and community institutions that serve them. We adopt this approach not to diminish the importance of the problems that exist, but to learn the lessons of success. The Foundation is confident that this effort to look with renewed respect at youth, where it strides as well as where it stumbles, will help forge the links of understanding and mutual responsibility that make our democracy strong."

The publications in this series have been prepared to inform the Commission and to stimulate its thinking. While the Commission does not necessarily endorse the various findings presented, it does encourage their thoughtful consideration in the interests of American youth.

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THE INTERACTION OF FAMILY, COMMMUNITY, AND WORK IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

Stephen F. Hamilton

This paper was prepared for the Commission by **Stephen F. Hamilton**, Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies in Cornell University's College of Human Ecology.

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March 1988

THE INTERACTION OF FAMILY, COMMMUNITY, AND WORK IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

Stephen F. Hamilton

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Introduction

The question guiding this paper is: **How do Family, Community, and Work Interact to Facilitate or Impede the Transition to Adulthood?** This question reflects my intention to cut across some of the issues addressed in other working papers on family and the community written for the Grant Foundation Commission by focussing on the dynamics of the interaction among these influences on young people as they move into adulthood. Three sub-questions will be addressed in turn as aspects of the overarching question.

The first subquestion is:

> How can we conceptualize the interactions among these three sources of influence?

A conceptual framework is needed that incorporates an interactive perspective. The second sub-question raises the major issue for a literature review:

> How effectively do family, community, and work socialize American youth for adulthood in the future?

Because the Commission's purpose, and, therefore, the purpose of the paper, is to generate policy recommendations, the third sub-question is:

> Where are the most promising points in this interactive system to direct efforts at improving youths' transition to adulthood?

Before grappling with these questions, however, I shall define some key terms and then sketch fictional biographies of two American archetypes that will serve as concrete references for the more abstract material to follow.

Definitions

Family

I will use "family" to refer to groups whose members are closely related by blood or marriage, or who act as if they were, and in which the members play important roles in each other's lives. Families, by this definition, include single

parents with children, couples with children from previous marriages ("blended families"), and unmarried couples living together with children. However, by this definition families must have more than one member. Parents and their adolescent children will be the focus of interest here.

Community

The term, "community," is defined both formally -- as incorporating all the people within a given geographic area, or the area itself -- and functionally --as a group of people living or working together and/or sharing common interests. Like the family, community is widely seen as declining throughout modern history. Indeed, Nisbet (1970) and many others before and since have explicitly related the decline in both family and community to industrialization and the rise of the modern state, which has weakened the ties between people and all other institutions, including family, community, church, and other voluntary organizations.

Anthropologists and sociologists have used different definitions of "community" (Redfield, 1955). Scherer (1972) rejected the definitions traditionally applied in community studies as inappropriate in modern societies where community in the traditional sense has all but disappeared. Among the contemporary equivalents she recommended for further analysis by social scientists is the "social network," a concept that has become increasingly popular in recent years (e.g., Cochran & Brassard, 1979; Garbarino, Burston, Raber, Russell, & Crouter, 1978; Blyth, Hill, and Thiel, 1982; Cochran and Bo, 1987). A social network is defined as the set of people with whom a given individual interacts regularly. This definition has the advantage of calling attention to a number of issues that are overlooked by debates about whether there is such a thing as "community." For example, one can examine the size of different persons' social networks; i.e., the number of people in them; or the diversity; i.e., how alike or different the people in them are; or the extent to which people in two individuals' social networks are in each others' social networks;

i.e., the degree of overlap.

Despite the appeal of this concept, and its promise for research and policy purposes, I shall use a mixed definition of community, incorporating both a common-sense geographical notion of community as town or neighborhood and a functional definition of community as the set of people with whom an individual interacts--the social network.

Work

Three kinds of paid employment influence youth: their parents' employment, their own current employment, and their prospects for future employment. Furthermore, work-like experience that is unpaid may be at least as important to youth as paid employment. For example, volunteer work, projects completed for 4-H or Scouts, intense involvement in athletics, music, or a hobby, might be more powerful sources of a work ethic and of career goals than bagging groceries.

Interaction

The point of stressing interaction is that such influences on youth as family, community, and work do not operate independently but rather each affects the other's impact on youth. The term will be discussed in greater detail below in connection with Bronfenbrenner's framework.

Transition to Adulthood

Erikson (1968, p. 136) tells us that an admirer of Freud's once asked the master what a normal person should be able to do well, then settled back in expectation of a long response. Freud responded simply, "lieben und arbeiten:" to love and to work. If we interpret these two verbs broadly, they provide a reasonably sturdy definition of adulthood. Although Freud unmistakably links sexual intercourse with lieben, adult loving includes as well being emotionally capable of caring about and caring for another person. A child can care about others and adolescents can engage in sexual intercourse, but being able to nurture, to take

responsibility for the emotional welfare of a partner and of dependents, is the sign of adulthood. Likewise, children and adolescents can do housework and schoolwork and can even take some forms of paid work, but arbeiten in the sense of being able to provide for one's material needs and those of others, working for a living, and having a life's work, is adult business. Finally, the "and" is important. Freud said it is the combination of the two capacities that defines a mature human.

The transition to adulthood, then, marks a person's growth from childhood dependence, both emotional and material, to the adult capacity to care for others who are dependent upon her or him. So defined, the process could be considered to last as long as childhood and adolescence. More usefully, though, it is restricted to the last stages of the process, marked by such actions as moving away from the parents' residence, taking a full-time job, and establishing a marriage or marriage-like partnership. Several points should be kept in mind about the transition as defined in this manner.

First, the transition rarely occurs all at once. It normally takes shape in several steps, and may include some "regression." A young woman may move into an apartment with a friend shortly after high school graduation, furnish it with items from her parents' attic, faithfully come home for Sunday dinner every week, and then move back home for a year after losing her job. All this may be followed three years later by her "real" moving away when she marries a young man who is in the Army and moves with him to another state. College students are the clearest instance of a transitional stage. Those who live in dormitories or apartments become independent of their parents behaviorally, but typically remain dependent financially and may continue to spend several months of each year living in their parents' home. Only after graduation and after getting a career-entry job do they become truly independent.

The same is true of the initiation of paid employment. Nearly all youth do

some work part-time during the school year, on weekends, and during school holidays. The expansion of higher education, the prevalence of continuing education, and workers' needs for retraining have rendered obsolete the notion that people attend school, then stop forever and work until retirement. Schooling and working are increasingly overlapping activities (Wirtz, 1975).

Beginning a family has also become a more drawn-out process in recent years. The age of marriage is rising and couples wait longer before having children. Cohabitation is a routine phenomenon, often serving as a trial marriage in anticipation of a future formal commitment.

A second point about the transition to adulthood is that the identification of youth as a time of transition carries the risk of defining a time of life solely by what it precedes rather than by what it is. Older youth certainly are preparing for adulthood and think of themselves in part as future adults, but they are also human beings who live in the present, whose lives are real and full and complex and serious apart from what they will become. Disputing the idea that education's purpose is solely to prepare young people for the future, Dewey said,

> *A person, young or old, gets out of his present experience all that there is in it for him at the time in which he has it. When preparation is made the controlling end, then the potentialities of the present are sacrificed to a suppositious future. When this happens, the actual preparation for the future is missed or distorted. The ideal of using the present simply to get ready for the future contradicts itself. It omits, even shuts out, the very conditions by which a person can be prepared for his future. We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything. (1938/1963, p. 49)*

Finally, and in the same vein, we must not view adulthood as a finite goal which, once achieved, allows ~~of~~ no further growth. There comes a time in every person's life when he or she considers him or herself an adult and others concur: marriage, the 21st birthday, the beginning of a career, parenthood, surviving a personal tragedy, assumption of a mortgage, or the achievement of a long-sought

goal may provide public markers of the attainment of adult status. But growth and change continue.

Socialization

The term, "socialization," is a useful one when considering influences on young people as they become adults. Brim (1966) defined socialization as, "the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable them to participate as more or less effective members of groups and the society." By this definition, learning is one aspect of socialization and development, a broader term, contributes to socialization but is "programmed" in part by the organism, rather than entirely acquired. Although this concept seems reasonable enough and useful, it stresses too much the individual's subordination to the existing social order (Hamilton, 1987a). This criticism should alert us to the danger of using the concept in an overly mechanistic, deterministic manner and of ignoring the individual's active participation in the socialization process.

Two Archetypal Biographies

Louise Adams was born in 1915 and grew up in eastern Nebraska. As a farm girl, she was expected to help her mother cook, clean, and do the laundry, and take care of her younger brothers and sisters. She also did her share of tending the garden, gathering eggs, and bottle-feeding orphaned calves. During her tomboy years she helped build fences and learned to drive the tractor.

Conversations about the weather, about loans to buy the adjoining 50 acres and a new combine, and about the market for corn, wheat, beef, and pork were a staple around the Adams dinner table and parlor. As a result, Louise gradually acquired considerable knowledge about agriculture, economics, decision making, and the calculation of risk.

In a one-room school two miles down the road, Louise learned to read and write and do arithmetic. From Miss Morgan, who taught her in fifth through

seventh grades, Louise acquired a love of poetry and a burning desire to become a teacher too, a desire she eventually achieved by earning her teaching license at the normal school in Kearney.

When she was 15, Louise's 4-H calf won a red ribbon at the state fair in Lincoln. She was also a member of the Baptist Youth Fellowship and sang in the church choir. Grandpa and Grandma Hrbek, who moved to town after giving up the farm, attended the same church. So did her Uncle Pete, who ran the grain elevator, and his family. As long as she could remember, her cousin Anna had been her best friend. She never knew her father's parents because they died soon after she was born. His brothers both stayed in Ohio, and his sister moved to California.

Murray Jacobs was also born in 1915, but grew up on Charlotte Street in the Bronx. His father came to the United States from Germany in 1902 and, after working in a variety of jobs, married his mother and began selling men's clothes in his father-in-law's store. When Murray was 12, his grandfather died and his father and Uncle Benjamin took over the store as partners.

Owning a store, like farming, is an all-consuming occupation. As a child, Murray helped clean up around the store and ran errands. He frequently heard his father and uncle talking about fabrics, profits, taxes, and what their competitors were doing. He was aware of both the dangers and the attractions of expanding into the space next door and was excited when the decision was made and the workers came to remodel the store.

Murray went to grammar school with other children who were mostly from recently naturalized Jewish families. His high school, however, was a League of Nations. His classmates were Irish and Italian, Polish and Russian. Although some of them belonged to gangs and wouldn't associate with others except to fight, Murray moved easily among different groups. A member of the drama club, he played the part of Coriolanus in his senior year. He didn't enjoy school work, but

his mother made sure he and his brothers and sisters did their homework regularly; and his grandmother was always as effusive in her praise for the ones who brought home good grades as she was biting in her reprimands of the others.

Murray also attended Hebrew school, but he learned at least as much on the streets as in school. Everywhere he went Murray could hear people talking about ideas and events. The news stand on the corner sold newspapers and magazines in five languages.

The most important event in Murray's youth was the bankruptcy of the clothing store. It happened in 1932 when he was 17. After the initial shock, his father and uncle were lucky enough to be hired as cutters by one of their former suppliers, but the family had to move into a smaller apartment, and Murray had to get a job at the green grocer's after school. He also gained a new goal: he decided to become a lawyer. Everyone in the family believed that if they had found a better lawyer they could have saved the business from foreclosure, and Murray resolved to become the kind of lawyer who could prevent such injustices.

Both Louise and Murray grew up in solidly bourgeois families, their fathers owning the enterprises in which they earned their living. If Mr. Adams had been a sharecropper raising tobacco on someone else's land in Georgia or if Mr. Jacobs had spent his entire working life as a fabric cutter in a garment manufacturer's loft, then their experiences would have been quite different. The material conditions of their lives, the kinds of concerns they heard adults discussing, and their ideas about work and their own future prospects would have been different if their fathers' employment had placed them in the working class.

But class alone does not account for all of the important differences in their lives. In their expectations regarding their future place in the adult world, Murray had more in common with Louise's brothers and Louise with Murray's sisters than they had in common with each other. Murray's residence in New York City and the

Jewish traditions in which he was enmeshed fostered in him beliefs about how truth may be found and how people live together that disagreed in some ways with Louise's beliefs, growing out of a rural Protestant background. For example, Murray was a lifelong supporter of the union movement and the Democratic party because of his belief in the value of collective action while Louise, a solid Republican, saw individual and family self-reliance as the key to economic strength and political harmony. Moreover, the particular kinds of work in which their fathers engaged affected their political and economic beliefs. Louise grew up in the midst of the Jeffersonian ideal of yoeman farmers and never had any reason to doubt that independent producers were America's muscle and blood. Murray spent his young life amid commerce, where entrepreneurialism, finance, and formal contracts are valued.

It is characteristically American that Louise's second son and Murray's daughter met and fell in love while attending college. They were married in a Unitarian church and now live in a suburb of Boston, where she is a pediatrician and he is an electrical engineer. After some misgivings, both Murray and Louise approved of the match. They take equal pride in their shared grandchildren.

An Ecological Perspective on the Socialization of Youth

These fictional vignettes from a simpler America make the point that family, community, and work are highly interdependent. Families are located within particular communities that are characterized in large part by the kind of work in which the breadwinners are engaged. The concept of social class captures some of this interdependence, but it is inadequate by itself; gender, religion, race and ethnicity, and geographic location operate in interaction with class.

Furthermore, human beings are more than the vector of the influences upon them. Individual characteristics, whether genetically founded or induced by the environment, play a role as well. Human beings are not steel pinballs whose

trajectories are determined completely by when, in what direction, and how hard they are bumped. They have tastes and motives and talents that interact with the external environment, affecting the way they interpret and make use of those influences. To some degree humans are able to choose the environments in which they are located, exposing themselves selectively to external influences.

Bronfenbrenner's Framework

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) has made this point while urging psychologists to adopt an ecological perspective, attending to the interactions among influences on human development rather than studying those influences one-at-a-time, as is conventionally done. I shall not attempt to summarize his rich and provocative book in this space, but shall draw from it some insights regarding the question of how to conceptualize the interactive effects among family, community, and work.[1]

Bronfenbrenner divides the human ecology into four levels: 1. microsystem; 2. mesosystem; 3. exosystem; and 4. macrosystem. 1. The microsystem is a setting in which an individual is directly engaged with a primary, face-to-face group (p. 22). The key elements in any microsystem are activities, roles, and interpersonal relations. The family is a microsystem, as is a workplace and a community when it is defined as a personal social network. 2. The mesosystem is the system of different microsystems in which a person is engaged or, stated slightly differently, the connections between those mesosystems (p. 25). Louise's mesosystem, then, was constituted by the links among her family, school, church, and 4-H club. Her own participation in all of them formed one link. Her cousin Anna's participation in more than one of those settings was another link. 3. An exosystem is a microsystem or mesosystem in which the individual of interest does not participate directly but which nonetheless has a strong influence on the individual by affecting what happens in settings where she or he does participate (p. 25). Louise's school board is one example. Another is her mother's sewing circle, to which her choir

director and 4-H club leader also belonged. 4. Finally, the macrosystem is the culture or society in which a person lives as it affects the other three systems. It is the cultural pattern for the lower-level settings. Social class clearly comes into play at the macrosystem level, but Bronfenbrenner urges attention to how social class operates at the micro, meso, and exosystem levels in addition to verifying that it is important.

What is most strikingly original in Bronfenbrenner's formulation, at least for psychology, and what is most appropriate in the present discussion, is his attention to connections among settings and the influence of settings and phenomena in which individuals do not participate directly. From the series of hypotheses about the mesosystem that Bronfenbrenner proposed (pp. 211-217), we can infer that family, community, and work would promote optimal socialization to the extent that:

- a young person is able to interact with some of the same people in more than one setting;
- settings include people of diverse age, race, ethnicity, social class, and other characteristics;
- valid information and constructive attitudes regarding other settings are provided in each setting;
- a young person has an amount of power in each setting appropriate to her or his needs and abilities;
- the degree of inter-setting linkage or mesosystem support matches the developmental level of the person.

This last criterion is typical of an ecological perspective in calling attention to the way in which an environment's influence depends upon the qualities of the person in the environment. To illustrate the point, it was highly beneficial when Murray's father arranged his job at the green grocer's and took him there for his first day's work, but it would have been totally inappropriate for him to report to work with

Murray when he first joined a law firm.

Two "exosystems" that loom large in the lives of youth as they become adults are their parents' workplaces and their own future workplaces. Both are settings in which they do not participate directly but which, nonetheless, have a strong influence on them. The community, defined geographically rather than as a social network, is another exosystem. People in the community with whom the young person does not interact directly make decisions and take actions that affect the young person, for example, employers, lawmakers, and school officials. A geographic community's economic condition is also part of the exosystem.

At the exosystem and macrosystem levels, Bronfenbrenner's theme continues to be that development is enhanced to the extent that the young person is allowed and encouraged to engage in progressively more demanding roles, relationships, and activities while receiving appropriate support and steadily gaining power over the conditions of her or his life. His concluding hypothesis is,

> *The development of the child is enhanced through her incremental involvement, from childhood on, in responsible, task-oriented activities outside the home that bring her into contact with adults other than her parents. (p. 282)*

Murray and Louise were fortunate not only in having stable and supportive families but also in having teachers, family friends, club leaders, and other adults who helped them acquire knowledge, skills, and values, and demonstrated for them how adults behave.

Interaction

The term, "interaction," occurs frequently enough in this paper to repay further explication. The mesosystem, by definition, is where people from one setting interact with those in another, with the result that the influences of such settings as family, community, and work are not pure or isolated but mixed or interactive.

Settings also interact with each other in the mind of the person, who

combines and transforms external influences in ways that reflect the sum total of previous experiences, anticipation of future opportunities, and certain inherent tendencies. An ecological perspective is not, that is to say, a naive environmental determinist position. Rather individuals are assumed to bring to any situation some combination of genetic and acquired predispositions that lead them to act upon and understand the situation in distinctive ways and to take away with them different "influences" than another individual would experience under the same circumstances.

Referring to the phenomenological tradition in psychology and sociology, which emphasizes people's perceptions of reality, Bronfenbrenner quoted W.I. and D.S. Thomas who said, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 23). Borrowing from Dewey (1938/1963), who stated a similar idea, we can say: 1) there is interaction between persons and settings; 2) there is interaction among settings; and 3) the most consequential interaction occurs inside the mind of the person as she or he interprets, makes choices, and acts.

Louise and Murray in Ecological Perspective

Bronfenbrenner's general principles can be applied to our two fictional exemplars of people who successfully made the transition to adulthood under generally favorable conditions. Murray and Louise grew up in close families where they experienced both love and "progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity." They assumed additional responsibilities around the house and in the family business as they became old enough to do so. Their parents introduced them into the wider community and placed them for limited periods of time in the care of trusted adults with whom they remained in close communication: teachers, religious instructors, leaders of youth groups. These other adults complemented the extended kin network of grandparents, aunts and uncles. Thus, Murray and Louise engaged with others playing diverse roles and assumed a larger variety of roles themselves as they grew up. Most importantly, the people they knew best, and the settings in

which they spent most of their time communicated some of the same messages about the importance of hard work, whether in school, at home, or on the job, and about the opportunities available for those prepared to work for them. Other cultural and ethical values received mutual reinforcement so that Murray and Louise developed belief systems that were compatible with those of their parents and functional both in their immediate communities and in the larger society.

As they grew older and progressively obtained more independence, more power in the settings and the relationships in which they were involved, they made choices and took actions that led them away from the enfolding presence of their families, but they carried with them the values, commitments, and orientations that they had learned from their families. Neither Murray nor Louise followed in their parents' footsteps. They adapted to changed conditions and changed demands by society for the kind of work required and the kind of preparation appropriate to it.

How Effectively Do Family, Community, and Work

Socialize American Youth for Adulthood in the Future?

The ecological perspective, as expressed in Murray and Louise's fictional biographies, introduces three themes that will be be elaborated in the following pages: the strength of connections among family, community, and work; the degree of harmony in their influences; and the extent to which they jointly socialize youth to the realities of life in modern society.

The criteria extracted from Bronfenbrenner above suggest that effective socialization requires strong links among settings for children that become looser as they move into youth. Further, they suggest that participation in one setting should help a young person participate effectively in another; i.e., that settings be harmonious in their influence rather than competitive. In addition, a point Bronfenbrenner does not stress, socialization must be appropriate for conditions of adult life that may not yet be known. It is possible for the various agents of

socialization to work together effectively to prepare young people for a world that no longer exists.

A review of selected literature bearing on these issues supports three propositions that add to our understanding of how effectively family, community, and work socialize American youth. (A proposition, in philosophical terminology, is a statement that is open to proof or disproof. These statements are not laws but defensible claims.)

A. Harmonious interaction among family, community, and work in support of the transition to adulthood has been more characteristic of small communities in preindustrial societies than it is of the contemporary United States.

B. The interactive influences of family, community, and work strongly reflect class and race.

C. Distinctive patterns of interaction among family, community, and work in other modern industrial democracies demonstrate that culture affects the transition to adulthood, not just economic and political structures.

The Transition to Adulthood in History

Proposition A. Harmonious interaction among family, community, and work in support of the transition to adulthood has been more characteristic of small communities in preindustrial societies than it is in the contemporary United States.

My construction of Louise and Murray's biographies was guided in part by nostalgia for a simpler time when family, community, and work were physically closer to one another and psychologically better integrated than they seem to be today. One of the characteristics of modern society, noted by classic sociologists such as Weber and Tonnies a century ago, is its tendency to place in separate spheres functions that are inseparable in premodern societies, most notably work and family life, and to separate those, in turn, from geographic community.

Agriculture and craft production are easily incorporated into the home, unlike most contemporary work, which is done in factories and offices located many miles from the home. Separated from work, the family becomes focussed on such physical needs as nourishment and sleep, on recreation, nurturance of children, and on meeting emotional needs. Its economic function is fragmented and abstracted as individual members go away from home to do their work and bring back money.

For young people, this condition removes what was once a major vehicle for socialization: observing and participating with adults in adult work. Learning, rather than occurring collaterally with work, becomes a specialized activity guided by specialists in schools. As specialists, teachers may have little or no connection with the local community or with their students' parents.

In preliterate societies, schools in this sense are unknown. Young people learn most of what they need to know by playing and by participating in progressively fuller ways in the real work of the family and community. When they need more specific instruction, such as in sexual relations or religious rituals, they receive it from selected members of the community whose primary roles are not teacher (Muus, 1980).

Rather than a functionally integrated whole, family, community, and work in modern societies are relatively independent entities, hence Bronfenbrenner's stress on the value of links among settings that in earlier times and simpler societies were inextricably linked. But, as noted above, strength of connections and harmony of influence among these three settings are not the only issues. Another is whether their influence succeeds in socializing young people for the world as they will experience it. This issue is especially pertinent in modern societies where adults cannot be assumed to know what youth will need to know in the future. Although we like to think of this as a recent phenomenon, there have been many times and places when war, plague, discoveries, and innovations have worked profound and

rapid alterations in brief periods. Consider the impact of Roman colonization on Celtic villagers in Britain or of the Protestant Reformation on Germany.

The two most notable historical surveys of youth in the United States (Kett, 1977) and in Europe (Gillis, 1974) identify the stage of "semi-dependency" with youth and trace changes in the duration of that period through modern history. Dependency, according to this formulation, is the state in which children rely upon their parents for their material needs and parents are in nearly complete control of their children's behavior. Independence of parents in material well-being and in behavior is associated with adulthood. The time in between, characterized by greater independence than childhood but less than adulthood is the period of youth. Eisenstadt (cited by Elder, 1980) has pointed out that such an intermediate period exists in all societies known to history. The interesting comparative questions have to do with variations in timing and duration, in the social roles assigned to youth and the socially constructed meanings of the category, and in the relation of these variations to demographic, economic, and social conditions.

Youth Turmoil

Historical accounts of youth reveal that youths' tendency to resist adult authority and to value relations with their peers do not result from a recent decline in the strength of family and community, but have taken new forms in the twentieth century. According to Gillis, unmarried young men in pre-industrial England celebrated certain holidays, especially Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) and May Day, with pranks, teasing, mockery, and sometimes serious violence directed against adult authorities. Formal organizations of young journeymen in England and on the continent provided social support outside the family and promoted the economic interests of a relatively powerless group. Even under economic conditions that provided young people with little free time, young people pursued formal and informal means of having fun and getting acquainted with potential mates.

Second, these accounts alert us to the dangers of viewing youth as an undifferentiated group when, in fact, class differences in the experience of this period of life have been dramatic. For example, in the second half of the nineteenth century, military academies instilled conformity and a sense of separateness into aristocratic German youth. German universities were elite institutions where high scholarship by the few was balanced by drinking and dueling by the many. During the same period, the elite English public (boarding) schools were grudgingly opening their doors to the scions of middle class families, exposing them and their nobler classmates to a total institution designed to prepare them to lead and preserve the Empire. In contrast, the schooling of working class youth in both countries ended early, if they had any at all, and they took up apprenticeships or unskilled work full-time by age 14.

In addition to increasing the historical accuracy and complexity of our views of youth by calling attention to class differences, the authors also point out that current images of adolescence have been shaped predominantly by what was desirable and possible for middle class young people. Referring to the twentieth century, Gillis contrasts the image of innocent carefree adolescence with the image of dangerous juvenile delinquents, describing the two as forming a dialectic in the minds of those wishing to improve adolescents and society. Because working class youth failed to match the ideal view, they were identified with its opposite and their behavior, which had in earlier times been accepted as normal and tolerable ("boys will be boys," "sowing wild oats") was stigmatized and criminalized in the twentieth century.

Gillis also points out that the view of adolescence as a time of necessary storm and stress, of pathological struggle to adapt to physical maturity and to find a place in society, grew out of a particular set of circumstances associated with middle class German youth toward the end of the nineteenth century: namely, that

the only institution devoted to their education and socialization was the purely academic Gymnasium, which left them without the support of either a strong family or an institution in loco parentis such as the English public school. High levels of psychological disturbance were reflected in frequent student suicides. The German and Austrian physicians and psychologists who treated these youth mistakenly generalized their condition to all adolescents. English and American scholars and practitioners took over the diagnosis (as, for example, G. Stanley Hall did from Freud), and a definition of adolescence and a diagnosis of the problems of youth resulted that continues to emphasize the psychological over the social and economic; i.e., to explain issues of youth in terms of what is wrong with individual youth rather than in terms of how certain groups of young people fit or do not fit into a social and economic system.

Variations in Youth's Duration

Kett and Gillis also stress that youth is not necessarily more extended today than in the past. They identify three different eras in which the duration of semi-dependency was relatively long, then shorter, and then longer again. Before the middle of the nineteenth century, it was common for families to send children away as early as age seven to ten when their labor had some value to others and the cost of maintaining them at home might overtax family resources. Boys went to work on a neighbor's farm or shop. Girls and boys became live-in servants for wealthier families. In the towns and cities, apprenticeship typically began at age 14 and lasted to age 21. It involved living in the master's home and submitting to his fatherly control as well as his instruction in a craft.[2]

Young people in such circumstances were relatively independent of parental supervision and dependent instead on unrelated adults for their sustenance. As minors, they owed any earnings they might acquire to their fathers. Yet being out of the family home made them more independent than children. Kett characterizes

the semi-dependency of youth in the early nineteenth century as consisting in greater freedom of employment and residency combined jarringly with total subordination to non-kin masters. One factor inseparable from this condition was the marginal quality of subsistence for most people at this time and the fearsome toll of mortality on both children and adults. Parents could not count on their children surviving them, and orphanhood was a normal state for children.

Industrialization, proceeding apace by the middle of the nineteenth century, brought changes, but those changes did not affect everyone at the same time or in the same direction. The previous stages of industrialization, primarily in textiles, had actually brought families closer together. Children could be profitably employed in cottage industry, and even when factories with power-driven looms began replacing hand looms, whole families often worked together under the father's supervision, thus lengthening the period of dependency and shortening semi-dependency. Late in the nineteenth century, child labor became less profitable in most industries.

In the meantime, schools had arisen as institutions devoted to the education and socialization of children. Aristocratic children had always had tutors and exclusive schools. Many working class parents and their children resisted compulsory schooling as unnecessary and an interference with childen's wage earning. Thus, increased schooling went hand-in-hand with the enlargement of the middle class and its growing social and economic power. Schooling that lasted into high school and university was a luxury that only the most dedicated and the most fortunate could afford. Schools perpetuated the dependency of youth on their parents, who were required to pay their expenses and forego their earnings.

The second half of the nineteenth century, however, was also an era of relatively brief semi-dependency for many youth. Rapid commercial, then industrial growth brought with it new opportunities for young men to make their way without

assistance from their parents and without the subordination of apprenticeship or other forms of indenture. Thus, when we bemoan the postponement of adulthood by extended schooling among contemporary youth, we are comparing our own period not to a generalized past but to a specific era of self-made men who were able to begin adulthood young because of peculiar economic and social conditions. The extended period of semi-dependency characterizing contemporary youth in school was associated before industrialization with an equally prolonged but less universal and probably less developmentally beneficial form of semi-dependency.

This portrayal of nineteenth century youth has been refined by Modell, Furstenberg, and Hershberg (1977), who exploited Philadelphia census data to make direct comparisons between youth cohorts in 1870 and 1970. They focussed on five elements of the transition to adulthood: exit from school; entrance to the work-force; departure from the family of origin; marriage; and the establishment of a household (p. 9). They determined the distribution of ages in young people making these five transitions.

Not surprisingly, they found clear evidence of the extension of formal schooling, and that employment began earlier in 1870. They also found that the five transitions now occur in closer proximity to one another and are completed in a shorter period of time than a century ago, on average. Delayed marriage was more common then. Young people continued to live with their parents longer, and it was common for young married couples to live with parents for several years before establishing their own residence.

What has changed as the twentieth century progressed, therefore, has not been simply a prolongation of youth, but a change in the pattern of transition and of the importance of different elements of the transition.

> *No longer are the family transitions the predominantely consequential ones: today school departure and work-force entry are far more important in shaping the subsequent work career than a century ago. And today the familial transitions are not so enduring as was once the case. In the*

> *nineteenth century, the family was a unique institution, standing alone; in the twentieth, it is one of many; or rather, one of the many in and out of which individuals have to thread their way. (Modell, Furstenberg, & Hershberg, 1977, p. 29)*

The tendency to look with alarm on the present and with nostalgia at the past is not new. Kett (p. 259) quotes statements from approximately 1850, 1900, and 1920, each lamenting the confusions of modern life for contemporary youth and contrasting them unfavorably with the presumed stability of some earlier period. Each of them might have been written yesterday. (See also Cohen, 1976.)

Careful examination of the past alerts us to the simultaneous coexistence of contrary trends and of practices in some areas thought to have been left far behind. Reading annual school reports, Kett detected a tendency for concerns about youth to move westward each decade through the early nineteenth century, the themes of the Massachusetts reports of the 1840s being echoed in the 1850s in Ohio, in the 1860s in Michigan, and in Iowa in the 1880s and 1890s (p. 127). He also points out that contemporary observers were confused about the impact of industrialization on youth because its first stages increased the demand for young unskilled workers but subsequent stages decreased demand, and the stages varied from one industry to another and from one location to another (p. 147ff).

Such accounts as Peshkin's (1978) of contemporary adolescence in a small midwestern town provide further reminders of the variability of conditions under which youth become adults. Although he observes critically that the people of "Mansfield" purchase their sense of community at the price of maintaining anti-democratic and anti-intellectual prejudices, he portrays a true community in which young people have a valued place and know where they are likely to be as adults and in which family, community, work and school form an integrated whole.

Class and Race

Proposition B. The interactive influences of family, community, and work strongly reflect class and race.

It is necessary for some purposes to speak of the family, the community, and the workplace in broad general terms intended to capture essential features of most of these settings. However, in order to penetrate very far into the issues addressed in this paper, we must quickly acknowledge that families of different classes and races tend to occupy different communities and that their workplaces are not identical. Moreover, there is an isomorphism among these settings that has profound impact on their occupants.

Social class, by definition, is determined primarily by one's occupation which reflects educational attainment and governs earnings. Only persons of independent means are exceptions to this rule and in the United States most in that tiny group find employment that befits their social status even though it is not required for their sustenance.

Community, defined both as the people with whom one interacts and the places in which one lives, reflects social class. American neighborhoods are remarkably homogeneous in income levels, primarily because of the prevalence of single family houses and the practice of clustering houses of comparable value in the same places. Even large cities, where people of diverse social class are thrown together in the streets and on the sidewalks, have sufficient numbers of people to enable the better off to live in buildings and on blocks where it is too expensive for most. Small towns, where small space and small populations virtually require higher levels of interact, tend to contain only a narrow range of social classes.

Class Influences on Youth

Hollingshead (1975), along with other community sociologists of the Chicago school, mounted an empirical challenge to the fond belief that social classes were a superannuated relic of feudal times, found in Marx's Europe, perhaps, but not in the democratic United States. His detailed study revealed the ways in which young people's social class affected everything in their lives: the other youth with whom they were friends, the part-time jobs they held, what they did for recreation, even where they hung their coats in the school building. He summarized in exemplary fashion social class continuity in the influences of family, community, and school.

> *The behavior patterns learned by the child in the home and the neighborhood are carried into the school and other areas of community life. In school the child encounters children from other neighborhoods who have other behavior patterns and other definitions of behavior. In these nonfamily and nonneighborhood situations, the attitudes and behavior patterns associated with some class subcultures are more acceptable than others.... These differentiating processes continue throughout the elementary school years: they become even more powerful as controls as high-school-aged boys and girls are enmeshed in the pressures of the peer group. Pressure is brought to bear on a child to selecte friends and recreational pursuits that conform with parental expectations. In all classes, children are usually guided by their parents along lines approved by the class culture. (pp. 384-385)*

Hollingshead accounts in this manner for the continuity of social class distinctions across settings.

Class and Parental Style

Another question to ask is where the class-related behavior patterns and attitudes originated. Although there are competing answers to this question, Kohn (1977) has provided one of the most theoretically satisfying and empirically compelling. According to his longitudinal studies and complex statistical analyses, parents' values regarding their children reflect their working conditions. Specifically, parents whose work is more substantively complex and requires them to make independent judgments stress the importance of their children becoming independent and creative. Those whose work is simpler, more repetitive, and closely

supervised value obedience and conformity in their children.

Other researchers (e.g., Hess, 1970) have found class-related differences in child-rearing practices and Elder (1963), reviewing research on child-rearing practices, concluded that more democratic and affectionate practices favored by middle class professional parents are more effective both in securing children's compliance with parents' wishes and in inculcating the attitudes and personal styles associated with middle class status. (See also Baumrind (1975). A recent study by Dornbusch and his associates (1987) extends this association to school performance, indicating that adolescents whose parents use "authoritative" styles do better in school.

Peers

It is important to note in Hollingshead's formulation that parental and peer influence (peers being a significant part of youths' social networks) tend to be consistent within social classes, rather than competing, as the conventional wisdom would have it. Although parents' perceptions of increasing conflict with their children as they enter adolescence has been confirmed by research, studies of normal adolescents and their families have found that conflict is not deeply serious. It tends to be over such matters as clothing styles and appropriate times to come home at night, not about basic values, education, or career directions (Kandel and Lesser, 1972; J.C. Coleman, 1980; Montemayor, 1983). Hallinen (1982) has accounted for this consistency by pointing out that adolescents select their peers primarily from age-mates they perceive as being like themselves. Those age-mates, in turn, tend to come from families with parents like their own. Thus, the picture of "peer pressure" leading adolescents away from their parents in directions they would not otherwise have gone appears to have been overdrawn.[3] (See also Cochran and Bo, 1987.)

Race, Class, and School

One way in which race and class affect the transition to adulthood is via school performance. Black and Hispanic youth, on the average, perform less well in school than whites and members of some other minority groups. Yet the explanation for this fact is a matter of bitter and unresolved debate. At one extreme is the claim that differences in school performance result from differences in intelligence that are essentially unchangeable (Jensen, 1969). This explanation, which was widely accepted in the 19th and early 20th centuries but displaced by the Civil Rights Movement and the War on Poverty, was revived in opposition to the "culture of poverty" explanation that guided the compensatory schemes of the 1960s and '70s (Ravitch, 1983). According to this view, poverty, rather than race, is the source of poor school performance; the mechanism through which economic status affects school performance is culture in the sense of values, attitudes, and expectations transmitted from poor parents to their children. Thus, for example, poor parents are seen as not promoting school achievement either because they do not believe it is important or because they are themselves insufficiently educated to know how to do so effectively. Moreover, their own experience of failure makes them fatalistic about their children's prospects, a fatalism they communicate to their children in the form of low expectations.

The inherited low IQ explanation is associated with conservative political ideologies, the culture of poverty explanation with liberal. However, many liberals began to criticize the culture of poverty formulation during the 1970s as a form of "blaming the victim" (Ryan, 1976). Researchers found evidence that it was not parents but teachers who held low expectations for poor children (Leacock, 1969; Rist, 1970; Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968). Farther to the left, radical critics of education laid the blame for poor and minority youths' unsatisfactory school performance upon the capitalist economic system and liberal democratic political

institutions. Bowles and Gintis (1976), Carnoy and Levin (1976), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and others argued that schools merely reproduce the inequalities built into the social structure. Schools, according to this argument, are not the source of inequality but one means by which society sustains a social and economic hierarchy in the interests of those at the highest levels. Hence, neither the disadvantaged themselves nor the schools are to blame, and the prescription for change is to focus on economic and political structures rather than schools or the attitudes and behavior of the disadvantaged.

While the explanation based upon inherent intelligence has been thoroughly discredited (Gould, 1981; Ogbu, 1978; Darlington and Boyce, 1981), the culture of poverty and the radical explanations each have something of value to offer, though each suffers from attempting to explain too much. The complex and momentous phenomenon of poor school performance by disadvantaged youth and the limited life chances that follow deserve a more interactive, more ecological explanation.

A first step toward such an explanation is to acknowledge that although race and class are closely related, they are not identical issues. If we could eliminate disparities among races, we would still have to contend with class, and vice versa. Having made that point, let us attend to the explanations of two ethnographers who have studied at close range the attitudes and behavior of minority youth and lower-class youth, respectively.

John Ogbu studied the relation between school and community in a Black and Hispanic neighborhood in Stockton, California. By talking extensively with parents, teachers, and youth, examining school records, and observing carefully in a wide range of public and private settings, he developed a perspective that addresses elements of all three of the explanations summarized above. Contrary to claims about the culture of poverty, Ogbu found minority parents vocal in their support of schooling, frequently urging their children to work hard and get good grades in

order to get ahead in life. However, he also noted a double message that parents conveyed unintentionally when they complained about the discrimination they and others face from white Anglos. Ogbu perceived that when instances of discrimination were discussed, young people inferred that their hard work in school would not, in fact, enable them to succeed because their race or ethnicity would be held against them. Simultaneously Ogbu found teachers and school administrators failing to reward and encourage good school performance, resisting parents' efforts to help their children, and failing to provide information that would enable young people to make plans for the future. These representatives of the dominant culture, despite statements of their dedication to the cause of upward mobility, acted on the belief that Blacks and Hispanics were not sufficiently motivated and intelligent to improve their lot.

In response to this constellation of influences, and this is how his argument qualifies as truly interactive, Ogbu claims that minority youth simply do not try to do well in school or on standardized tests. Having concluded that good school performance will not help them get ahead, they see no reason to forego short-term pleasures of free time and peer interaction; they have no motivation to work hard. School failure is thus "adaptive" to the reality they perceive. In a subsequent book (1978) aimed directly at Jensen's (1969) argument based on intelligence, Ogbu (1978) advances a mild version of the radical critique, pointing to the existence of a "job ceiling," for minority people that limits the height of their upward social mobility. Being denied access to high status and highly rewarded occupations, minority youth rationally choose to avoid the pain of academic striving, settling for the low status jobs they can obtain without higher education because they believe they could do little better even if they remained in school and got good grades.

Using comparable methods to investigate a clique of working-class boys in a British secondary modern school, Paul Willis (1977) added an interactive perspective

to the Marxian explanation of school failure on the part of disadvantaged youth. Rather than being powerless pawns in a system manipulated by the dominant classes, the boys he portrayed made choices about their behavior that they believed confirmed their independence from higher authorities and their identities as working class males. They actively opposed the authority of teachers and school administrators, and they denigrated all work other than manual labor as unworthy of white men. According to Willis, these boys were not simply relegated to lower class status by the machinations of the class system, but by their own ostensibly rebellious behavior, they actively participated in their occupational and hence social class assignment. Regarding their gleeful exit from school and transition into adult employment, Willis observes:

> *For a specific period in their lives "the lads" believe that they dwell in towers where grief can never come. That this period of impregnable confidence corresponds with the period when all the major decisions of their lives are settled to their disadvantage is one of the central contradictions of working class culture and social reproduction, and one in which the state school, and its processes, is deeply implicated. (p. 107)*

Ogbu complicates the culture of poverty notion and Willis complicates Marxian theory by treating disadvantaged youth as conscious actors who make choices and intepretations that shape their environment. In addition, they describe a set of factors that interact continually rather than a unidirectional influence. In both these ways they are advancing what can be labelled an ecological perspective.

Class and Community

Victoria Steinitz and Ellen Solomon (1987) continue this process and elaborate the ecological perspective in their longitudinal study of the transition to adulthood of bright working class youth in the Boston area. They identified working class youth in three communities whose IQ scores opened paths of upward mobility to them through higher education and interviewed them intensively, first while they were seniors in high school and then again four years later. The interviews (20 youth in each community; 10 males, 10 females) were designed to elicit the young

people's views of themselves and their futures in relation to their friends, their families, and the larger society.

One community, "Cityville," is predominantly working class. Young people there felt strongly bound to friends and family. Although the high school was rather large, students belonged to identifiable neighborhoods. The dominant ethos Steinitz and Solomon found among Cityville youth was caring for others. Being upwardly mobile was a source of pride so long as it did not threaten personal relations. "Milltown," a small industrial city 25 miles outside of Boston, is compact enough that young people belong to the whole community. Their values and dreams are traditional: hard work and honesty will be rewarded. Young people on their way from the working class into the middle class see themselves as striving to better themselves and their society. Working-class youth from "Townline" are more ambivalent. Their community is a suburb of Boston that contains some very affluent neighborhoods as well as their working class neighborhoods. Growing up as the poor kids in upper middle-class schools, they reject the materialism of their advantaged classmates while hoping for a better life than they experienced as children. They are strivers who are uncertain what they are striving for.

As Steinitz and Solomon's respondents moved into college or full-time employment, almost all encountered financial problems. They had to work part-time and sometimes drop out. Some took responsibility for supporting ailing parents or their own newly-formed families. In general, they found life harder than they had expected it to be. The kinds of careers many had hoped for proved more elusive than they had imagined. Young women encountered the disadvantages of their gender in the workplace and in personal relationships with men and were drawn by those experiences to the feminist perspective. Although some were working toward a personal world view with help from their studies and from their personal experiences, none seemed to have fashioned a coherent picture of the

economic and social system that allowed them to find a place in it where they could reconcile their materialistic and altruistic motives.

The three communities in which these youth grew up imbued them with distinctive values and perspectives that continued to color their perceptions in the years after high school. Cityville youth tended to live at home when commuting into Boston to attend college. They valued the working-class jobs they held for teaching them important lessons about hard work but looked forward to finding better jobs in the future. They maintained their friendships with classmates who had not gone to college. Milltown youth moved away from friends and family psychologically as well as geographically. They continued to see Milltown as a good place to grow up and maintained the values they associated with it, but simultaneously they saw it as overly parochial and their parents and friends as lacking ambition. Townline youth, who saw themselves as loners in high school, felt like loners as young adults, lacking attachments to people or places, struggling alone to find work consistent with their sense of justice.

The variety of experiences and ways of thinking Steinitz and Solomon found among their three groups of working-class youth makes it more difficult to speak glibly as if they are all alike. In fact, their respondents' family backgrounds and childhood experiences varied widely, depending on the kind of community in which they lived and on their families' resources and stability, and upon the vagaries of personal experience, such as a parent's illness or an unfortunate marriage.

Generalization and Specificity

Looking at youth in our society through a wide-angle lens, one can discern classes of youth whose parents tend to have similar levels of education and occupations of equivalent status. Youth from upper middle-class families are more likely to succeed in school and thus acquire access to the kinds of jobs their parents hold than are working-class youth, who tend to inherit their parents' lower

status. Discrimination against Black and Hispanic youth leads to their overrepresentation in the lower classes.

It is useful to recognize these general tendencies but once they have been established we need to look more closely to discover how they occur in the lives of real people. Using a close-up lens, we can discern patterns of behavior and attitude that are set in motion by parents, then reinforced by peers and adults at school and in the neighborhood. Parents' behavior, especially their child-rearing practices, appear to be heavily influenced by the nature of the work they do. They communicate values and expectations to their children, both intentionally and unintentionally, that tend to orient their children toward employment under similar conditions. Their children, by asserting their opposition to the performance demands and behavioral norms of the dominant class, may unwittingly collaborate in limiting their own future prospects. Yet it is neither accurate nor helpful to attribute poverty to the behavior of poor people when that behavior results from limitations on their experiences and aspirations that are imposed by our economic system and social structure.

The close-up view also reveals flaws in the categories that are visible through a wide-angle lens. "Working-class youth" decompose into smaller sub-classes in which additional factors such as the nature of the community, the stability of the family, parents' health, the precise nature of parents' work, and individual personal characteristics play a role that is invisible from a distance. The close-up view confirms the ecological premise that people participate actively in their own development.

Proposition C. Distinctive patterns of interaction among family, community, and work in other modern industrial democracies demonstrate that culture affects the transition to adulthood, not just economic and political structures.[4]

Economic determinism founders on the rock of culture. Although the Marxian

critics of schooling have gained some profound insights from their perspective on the power of the capitalist economic system over such social institutions as schools, their analysis cannot explain the diversity among school systems found in capitalist nations, far less the diversity in patterns of interaction among family, community, and work. History and culture continue to play a role in the structure of social institutions and in the connections among them. It is possible to construct a Marxian interpretation of socialization in any capitalist country, but when different capitalist countries' socialization practices and institutions can be shown to differ sharply, then other determinants must be considered as well.

West Germany

West Germany provides one example. Secondary schools there are highly differentiated, sorting young people into three different schools at grade five or seven on the basis of their demonstrated proficiency at school work. The three schools, Hauptschule, Realschule, and Gymnasium, are designed to prepare youth for careers in manual labor, managerial and technical occupations, and the professions respectively. All secondary and post-secondary schools are vocational schools in the sense that their curricula and selection processes are oriented to a particular level in the occupational hierarchy and many to specific occupations. Half of the older teenagers, predominantly those from the Hauptschule and Realschule are enrolled in the "dual system" of apprenticeship combined with vocational schooling for their last three years of compulsory education. Those who do not enter either apprenticeship or university attend secondary and post-secondary vocational schools.

Schools in West Germany have a narrower purpose than schools in the United States. Classes end by early afternoon. Extra-curricular activities are rare or nonexistent, as are guidance counselors. Because schools are selective and, in metropolitan areas, specialized at the Realschule and Gymnasium levels (For example, a Gymnasium may specialize in modern languages, classics, science and mathematics,

or music.), young people do not necessarily attend school with their childhood friends. Rather, they may travel some distance from their neighborhoods and establish a new network of peers.

Music, sports, dramatics, and the other leisure activities that U.S. youth engage in at school are the province of voluntary organizations and youth centers. Sports clubs, for example, sponsor soccer teams for players of all ages. Community marching bands typically involve adults as well as youth.

The sense of community is strengthened by a relative lack of mobility. Ten years is the standard term for an apartment lease. The importance of place, of hometown (Heimat), is nearly mystical in German culture (Walker, 1971). It is easier for many Germans to imagine emigrating to Argentina, Canada, or the United States, than to move from the south to the north of Germany, or vice versa.

I have argued elsewhere (Hamilton, 1987b) that the integration of school, work experience, and future employment prospects that occurs in apprenticeship makes it easier for parents to socialize their young people positively and, as a result, contributes to much lower rates of problem behavior in West Germany than in the United States. For present purposes, what is most important is the contrast between the way in which family, community, and work are linked in West Germany and in the United States. The institution of apprenticeship, the more limited functions of schools, and the greater strength and stability of neighborhoods create stronger links among those settings in West Germany than in the United States. As a result, the transition appears to be clearer and smoother for West German than for U.S. youth, especially those who do not enroll in higher education (Hamilton, 1987c).

Ecological Variation in West Germany

As always, however, when one looks more closely, the picture becomes more complicated. Sibylle Hübner-Funk (1987) and her colleagues at the German Youth

Research Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut) conducted an ingenious study that exemplifies and illuminates the ecological approach. Like Steinitz and Solomon, they interviewed working class young people from three different communities as they were leaving full-time schooling. However, their subjects were not upwardly mobile; they were leaving the Hauptschule and seeking apprenticeships in manual occupations.

The three communities were a rural town, a new residential area on the outskirts of Munich, and a downtown neighborhood in Munich. In each neighborhood, girls had a more difficult time than boys in finding an apprenticeship and were restricted to a narrower range of occupations, despite earning better grades in school. Their disadvantage was greatest in the traditional rural town, where the number and variety of possible workplaces was most restricted and where the primary vehicle for finding a place was family contacts. Girls were least disadvantaged in the new residential area on the city's outskirts, where the absence of family connections and local workplaces forced most youth to rely on formal channels, namely the government-run employment office, for finding an apprenticeship.

Each community fostered a particular view of the allocation of responsibility between individuals and the state for success in finding an apprenticeship. In the rural town, that view could be summed up with the statement, "Nothing works without personal contacts." The employment office was least important there and when it was used it simply fit into the local pattern of personal contacts because the people staffing it belonged to local social networks. At the opposite extreme, youth in the new housing area believed, "The state ought to take care of us," and relied most heavily on the employment office for placement. Youth in the downtown neighborhood held an individualistic view, "One should solve one's placement problems privately," and accordingly used a combination of approaches

including contact with the employment office, direct application to employers in the neighborhood, and exploitation of personal contacts.

While illuminating some of the interactions among family, community, and work in West Germany, this study nicely demonstrates both the value of an ecological perspective for uncovering dynamics that are obscured by more distal approaches and the variety in life experiences and attitudes contained within the category of "working class."

Comparable studies employing interviews of youth as they begin the search for apprenticeships have been conducted by Hurrelmann (1987) and Heinz (1987) and their colleagues, who followed their subjects through the transition process for several years. Both studies were designed to explore the impact of recent reductions in employment opportunities for West German youth resulting from slow economic growth combined with a surplus of baby boom youth entering the labor market. Hurrelmann found that the difficulty of finding a desirable apprenticeship has increased dependence on formal schooling which, in turn, has been "instrumentalized," seen only in terms of its contribution to employment. Heinz, interviewing young people in Bremen, one of the most economically depressed regions in West Germany, discovered a fascinating psychological process at work. Youth who were fortunate enough to find an apprenticeship in any field at all would "reconstruct their biographies," inventing reasons why the occupation they had fortuitiously found was really one they had been interested in all along. They would then assert the longevity of their interest in the occupation to interviewers who had spoken with them in previous years when they had stated entirely different interests and career wishes. Another phenomenon Heinz identified was a tendency to accept personal responsibility for coping with limited employment prospects that were clearly caused by economic forces rather than by any deficiencies on the part of the person. Thus, young people optimistically entered programs offering

continued full-time schooling on the grounds that they would make them more employable even though the prospects of finding an apprenticeship were no better for program completers.

The West German comparison highlights the importance in that country of apprenticeship as a formal institution supporting the transition to adulthood of young people who do not enroll in higher education. It makes connections among family, community, and work that are rarer in the United States and it succeeds, though not universally, in socializing youth for productive employment in changing workplaces. That institution, however, is enmeshed in a cultural, economic, and ideological context and cannot be understood in isolation. Apprenticeship tightly links school to work but it operates within community and family ties that retain a German character and vary in different ecologies.

Japan

Japan's remarkable economic performance has made it the object of sometimes resentful curiosity in the United States. We are anxious to learn how that country has managed so quickly to become so good at the things we once did best. Japan is a particularly useful case to inspect with regard to the interactive effects of family, community, and work because it represents an extremely high level of integration among the three, with school near the center of the nexus.

Japanese mothers care for their children with a remarkable singleness of purpose, carrying them on their backs whenever they leave the home, sleeping beside them at night, even sitting or lying beside them while they nap during the day. They are indulgent, achieving desired behavior with treats and pleading rather than direct commands. Current norms strongly favor families having no more than two children and mothers not being employed outside the home in order to be able to devote the requisite time and energy to their nurturance and to caring for their husbands. Fathers are not expected to be much involved with child rearing. They

typically work late and spend much of their leisure with colleagues (White, 1987).

Children's sense of belonging, initiated by extraordinary closeness to their mothers, is maintained by group activities in pre-schools and the early grades of elementary school. Children are always engaged in activities as members of a small group, of the class, of the grade-level, or of the whole school. For its annual sports day, the school is randomly divided into two competing teams, but the winning team is applauded, not the individual victors. There is no ability grouping for instruction; success or failure on an assignment belongs more to the group than to the individual. Academic achievement, or its absence, is attributed to effort rather than innate ability (Duke, 1986).

Examinations

Stress on group solidarity and group performance is balanced as children become older with stress on performing well in examinations. The ultimate examinations are those determining entrance to universities. Matriculation at a prestigious university virtually assures a secure and honorable career. But in order to succeed at "examination hell," one must receive a first-class high school education. High schools, like universities, are arrayed in a strict hierarchy and, like universities, select entrants on the basis of an examination. Therefore, by the time children move into fifth and sixth grades, their parents are beginning to enroll them in private classes (juku) or to hire tutors for supplemental instruction, practices that become more widespread when they enter middle school.

Although the Japanese school system was patterned after the American one during the occupation, its structure departs from the American model in many important respects. One is that compulsory education ends with middle school, the completion of grade 9 at age 15. High schools, not being compulsory, are selective even though they are public. There are not enough public academic high schools to enroll all who wish to attend. Those denied a place have four options. If their

families can afford it, they may enroll in a private high school, recognizing that their schooling will be inferior and that, as a result, they will be unlikely to score well on the university entrance examinations. Far less desirable, they can enroll in a public vocational high school, which does not rule out university entrance altogether but makes it far less probable. In extreme cases, young people become "high school ronin," studying all year in a juku in hopes of improving their examination scores the next time around.

The fourth option, entering the workforce at age 15, is by far the least desirable, even though it was the standard path when the system was devised only a few decades ago. Nearly 95 percent of Japanese youth graduate from high school, rendering its diploma the minimal credential for desirable jobs.

The Centrality of School

High school, driven by preparation for university entrance examinations, is intensely academic. Courses are demanding; classes meet 34 hours per week (including Saturday mornings), and only nine of those hours are nonacademic. Students do an average of two hours of homework per night and three on Sunday. The more ambitious also attend cram schools (yobiko). Participation in extra-curricular activities is at least as widespread as in US schools, but most schools limit students to one club.

Most of Japanese young people's time is devoted to school. When they are not in school, they are most likely to be either commuting or at home. A survey of teenagers' time use cited by Rohlen (1983) found that five hours per week was the average amount of time spent socializing with friends out of school. Part-time jobs are rare, limited, and frowned upon.

The prevalence of juvenile delinquency and teenage pregnancy is tiny compared to the United States. Strict law enforcement renders illicit drug abuse essentially nonexistent. Teachers are also formally empowered to proscribe undesirable student

behavior outside of school, such as smoking, riding motorcycles, and spending time in snack shops. Even the youth suicide rate, sometimes identified as the negative consequence of excessive pressure for school achievement, proves to be lower than for many other industrial nations (Rohlen, 1983).

Family, community, and work play their parts in supporting Japanese youths'extraordinary concentration on school and school performance. Mothers' primary duty is to help their children do well in school. Other family members encourage the student and urge him on to greater accomplishment. (The masculine pronoun is appropriate here because girls are not encouraged nearly as much and more than twice as many boys as girls apply to universities.) The dedicated student, furiously working toward examinations, has become a culture hero. News media shower them with attention every spring. Their achievement, therefore, brings honor not just to themselves but to their families, their schools, even their neighborhoods. Thus, although they must work alone, they do so for the good of those closest to them and for the nation.

Kiefer (1970) compares "examination hell" to rites of passage and conversion experiences, pointing out that both are imposed on youth by their families and communities and both involve collective suffering with age-mates followed by a new orientation and social role. Examinations constitute important rituals on the way to adulthood, each one marking the young person's initiation into a new group of peers.

> *His final transition from school to office is made with relatively little effort and with the help of both school and family since the relationship between these three institutions in Japan is much closer than is typically the case in America and since the mutual emotional dependence of age-mates functions to bind the office group together in exactly the same way that it binds classmates together. (Kiefer, 1970, p. 73)*

School achievement is directly related to future occupation because it determines the type and prestige level of the company that will hire university graduates. Employers use school performance as an indicator of applicants' quality

because the same personal characteristics of perseverence and ability to work in groups that are required in school are also required at work. Furthermore, language and mathematics are the central school subjects and their mastery qualifies graduates to perform the tasks required by business and industry. Employers do not expect applicants to have specific job skills. They prefer generalists who are quick learners and adept group members. Large firms then invest heavily in training new employees.

Although efforts have been made to develop vocational training institutions of various sorts since modernization began with the Meijii restoration in 1868 (Ishikawa, 1981), none has supplanted the pattern that persists today: "Vocational education, on-the-job training, is the responsibility of the company. Literacy and basic mathematics are the responsibility of the school" (Duke, 1986, p. 168).

In Japan, family, community, and work unite to encourage youth in their studies. Rohlen (1983) stressed the significant absence of a Japanese term for "adolescent." High school students are called children. Societal institutions conspire to keep them children so that they are not distracted from the serious business of learning. American notions of carefree youth, of adolescent experimentation, of engaging in an expanding range of activities and exploring new experiences are all foreign. Marriage occurs, on average, two years later than in the United States, and in many cases still follows parents' arrangements. Half of the 18-year-olds surveyed in 1981 said they had experienced kissing (Rohlen, 1983, pp. 291). To become mature means to prepare for the assumption of adult roles as workers and parents in the context of closely interdependent groups, not to become independent.[5]

Summary

Research on interaction among family, community, and work in contemporary and historical United States, in West Germany, and Japan has suggested that the

links among family, community, and work have weakened over time in the United States, that they have become less supportive of each other and more competitive, and that they are not as effective in promoting socialization to satisfying and productive adult roles for the present and the foreseeable future as they are in West Germany and Japan.

Connections among Family, Community, and Work

Except in small towns and perhaps in some especially vital inner city neighborhoods, social networks of youth tend to be limited and diffuse. They do not have large numbers of adults to turn to, nor are they well acquainted with age-mates unlike themselves. Parents often view themselves as being in competition with peers and popular culture. Their power over the environments their adolescent children inhabit is restricted. Thus, both the strength of the connections among family, community, and work, and the harmony of their interaction seem to have deteriorated.

Apparently the new residential areas of both West Germany and Japan have some of the same characteristics as suburbs in the United States, despite lower rates of residential mobility and higher density of persons in both nations. Yet both West Germany and Japan are relatively homogeneous compared to the United States in ethnicity and social class and are more unified in their commitment to academic excellence and to manufacturing high quality products for export. Neighborhoods in both nations are less stratified economically, with the result that neighborhood schools bring together a cross-section of children. Elementary schools in both countries avoid classifying young children according to ability. Ironically, distinctions are much sharper when they are made: at fifth or seventh grade in Germany and tenth grade in Japan. In both cases, differentiation is seen as being based on performance rather than innate ability. Germany uses school grades and Japan examination scores, and in both countries, teachers and parents emphasize

effort over IQ as the factors determining secondary school placement.

Parents are not highly involved in secondary schools in either country, but their schools seem better able to promote and enforce the standards of achievement and deportment that parents and other community members uphold. In both countries, students in the less prestigious schools are rowdier and less studious than those in the higher-level schools. In neither are students the faceless automata that some popular accounts make them appear.

Harmony among Family, Community, and Work

Schools in both countries appear to emphasize what employers seek: discipline, hard work, commitment, literacy, mathematical competence, and knowledge of science. Our best schools do as well. The United States led the way to universal secondary education, but, in comparison to other developed countries, the performance of our middle and lower groups of students is deficient. Japan achieves high levels of performance from ordinary youth by applying the same high standards to virtually all students. Although the students at the bottom, those who do not enroll in high school or attend vocational high schools, do not achieve at nearly the level as those bound for elite universities, they are functionally literate in a frightfully difficult written language. At worst, they learn to persist despite the extreme frustration of classes in which the material is too copious and too difficult, a quality that Japanese employers value highly.

The German approach to the middle and lower groups is quite different, placing far less emphasis on academic learning and focussing instead on specific vocational skill training. Apprenticeship integrates workplace and school to a degree unknown in either the United States or Japan, providing an alternative place for learning and a more compatible mode of learning for youth who no longer find full-time school worthwhile.

Like German employers, Japanese employers accept primary responsibility for

training workers and invest heavily in it. Large firms in both countries are readier and abler to make this investment than small firms. Their reward is a highly skilled workforce that demonstrates greater commitment to the firm, being much less likely to change employers than workers in smaller firms or than workers at all levels in the United States, where mobility is so high as to discourage employers from investing heavily in training.

Socialization for the Future

Any society in flux faces the challenge of using its current knowledge and resources to socialize youth for an uncertain future. Parents and educators are especially pressed by this conundrum. While it is impossible to say with certainty what preparation adults of the future should have to grapple with challenges to come, no better prediction is available than those based on a contemporary version of the venerable work ethic, now exemplified by Japan: hard work, willingness to delay gratification, dedication to acquiring knowledge and skills, and mutual respect between superiors and subordinates. One reason for our recent fascination with Japan is that their relations in the workplace appear to model a needed modification in the traditional rigid bureaucratic hierarchy, a modification stressing flexibility and participation over specialization and obediance. Although German industry has not pioneered such practices as quality circles (invented in the United States, by the way, but improved and exploited in Japan just like the video cassette recorder), their post-war labor relations have institutionalized labor participation in management. Furthermore, although many Germans fretted a decade ago that current industrial conditions had rendered apprenticeship outmoded, recent analyses have praised apprenticeship as the ideal method of preparing precisely the kind of highly skilled but highly flexible industrial workers who are critical to new modes of production (Kern & Schumann, 1986).

In the United States, we do an admirable job of socializing and educating the

top group. Our best high schools are excellent and our universities are arguably the best in the world. They certainly demand more commitment and performance from students than Japan's. University training for managers, lawyers, physicians, and engineers is first-rate. Schooling for those whose school performance and occupational attainment fall in the middle and lower levels is less than first-rate. Our collective metaphor of life as a contest leaves those who have not made it to the top convinced of their own inadquacy and the rest of society unconcerned about what becomes of them. They belong to a residual category of those who weren't good enough to graduate from college and assume one of the privileged professional positions. They are permitted to sort themselves out among the lower-ranking occupational classifications by a process of trial and error. Neither our public educational system nor private employers invest very much in teaching them. They are expendable when economic conditions change. Their best hope for the future is that their children can do better in school than they did and thus qualify for the benefits of high earnings, security, and prestige reserved for college graduates.

Recommendations

Before proposing some points within the interactive systems of family, community, and work where changes might be made to improve youths' transition to adulthood, we should first accept the limitations of this endeavor. We are not dealing with discrete, easily understood, or easily controlled entities. What families, communities, and workplaces are and the ways in which they interact respond to powerful and only partly manageable forces that we give such labels as economics, demography, social structure, and culture. If these forces could readily be manipulated, we would have shaped them long ago either, as we would hope, to enable every person to develop to the fullest or, as we must fear, to assure the power and privileges of the few at the expense of the many. Limited as we are to modest means, we must accept modest goals. Slow progress in the right direction is

preferable to either fatalism or utopianism.

Many of the issues raised thus far derive from inequality. Reducing inequality would be the most powerful means of improving youths' transition to adulthood. However, achieving this laudable end is neither simple nor sufficient. Even among those who agree that greater equality is desirable, and not all persons of good will do, there is great disagreement about how to pursue it. Moreover, the experience of the socialist countries, which have moved farthest in that direction, indicate that even the most extreme efforts to equalize wealth and power do not succeed fully and that they result in unacceptable sacrifice of liberty.

The following recommendations, therefore, assume the continued vitality of capitalism and representative democracy and are intended to promote rather than challenge basic American values. They are intended to strengthen the connections among family, community and work in ways that are likely to enhance youths' socialization for the future. Given the breadth of that purpose, they scarcely exhaust the range of promising actions. However, they exemplify some steps in the right direction.

1. Empower Parents

The parents of adolescents want and deserve special attention; many feel exceptional stress. Yet their sources of support are even more limited than those available to parents of young children. Although we have by no means met the legitimate needs of parents with young children, there is a thriving industry providing them with advice through books and magazines and with special products. Parent-Teacher Associations, nursery schools and day care centers (inadequate as they are in number and quality), and informal play groups provide focal points of supportive interaction and often access to professional assistance.

When parents stop taxiing their offspring and directly overseeing many of their activities, they also stop seeing other parents regularly. Parent involvement in

secondary schools is much more limited and much more distant than in elementary school. While many of the settings in which young children participate are directly under parents' control, adolescents find groups and places to be where their parents are not in charge. Although this movement is healthy in many respects, it leaves many parents feeling powerless.

Keniston's (1977) insightful analysis of child and family issues characterized parents' roles as increasingly managerial, meaning that under contemporary conditions, parents often coordinate a range of activities and services on behalf of their children rather than providing them themselves.

> *Parents today have a demanding new role choosing, meeting, talking with, and coordinating the experts, the technology, and the institutions that help bring up their children. The specific work involved is familiar to any parent: consultations with teachers, finding good health care, trying to monitor television watching, and so on. No longer able to do it all themselves, parents today are in some ways like the executives in a large firm -- responsible for the smooth coordination of the many people and processes that must work together to produce the final product. (Keniston, 1977, p. 19)*

Keniston goes on to point out that, in comparison with business executives, parents are strikingly weak in their power to achieve the desired coordination. Furthermore, middle class parents' education, status, and income give them far more power than lower class parents enjoy.

We need to find ways, therefore, to enhance the capacity of lower-class parents to realize their own values and aspirations for their children, at home, in the community, and at work. The most obvious institution over which parents wish to exert control is the school. Among the specific steps that might be taken are the following:

- Increase parents' involvement in the governance of secondary schools, including personnel decisions, educational policies, and disciplinary practices, recognizing that such involvement must be different from parental involvement in elementary schools in order to enhance the growing independence of

adolescents.

- o Assist both parents and teachers to communicate with each other more effectively. Attempts toward this goal should assume that both parents and teachers have young people's best interests at heart, but have different sources of expertise and different means of fostering those interests. What is required is not turning over youth to one group or another but promoting consistent and effective collaboration. (Dean, no date, has designed a program for this purpose at the elementary level.)
- o Continue to experiment with school innovations that allow parents and youth together to select from among distinctive types of secondary schools the ones they judge most compatible. Alternative and magnet schools have survived in many cities because they are better able to meet the needs of diverse students than monolithic comprehensive schools (Raywid, 1983).

Parents who do not live in small towns or affluent suburbs especially need more control over the conditions their adolescent children encounter in the community outside of school. They may be able to choose the youth groups in which their children enroll, but formal youth groups become less attractive to adolescents as they move into secondary school. Extra-curricular activities, commercial recreation, boy-girl relations, and peer groups wherever they congregate become the focus of their leisure time activities. In these settings, perhaps even more than in school, increasing maturity requires decreasing parental supervision. However, parents want assurance that their children will be protected from drug pushers, from violence, from temptations to engage in delinquent acts, and from pressure to engage in precocious and harmful sexual behavior, that at the least there will be someone they can turn to when they are confronted with such threats.

There are direct and indirect steps to be taken to increase such assurance.

- o Provide opportunities for youth to learn about drugs, sexuality, values, and

non-violent conflict resolution in family, school and community. Parents should be involved in planning such opportunities and should participate directly in some, but not all. (Planned Parenthood, for example, runs weekend retreats for parents and adolescents together.) Education in matters such as these is complex in the extreme. Some of that education should be located outside of schools because so many youth define as unreal everything that happens in classrooms.

- Give parents greater control over law enforcement in their own communities. Poor people are the victims of crimes far more often than others. Yet highly centralized law enforcement agencies may define all poor and minority people as potential criminals and view their primary function as protecting others from them. Institutional arrangements should break down the barriers of prejudice and hostility between police and people.
- Variations on the theme of neighborhood crime watches should focus particularly on threats to youth, such as sale of alcohol to minors, drug peddling, solicitation for prostitution or pornography, "fencing" (i.e., purchase and resale of stolen property), and violent assault. Responsibility for the safety and deportment of youth should be shared on the basis of explicit agreements among parents and other adults within definable communities. Youth should know that they will be both monitored and protected outside the home.
- A variety of approaches should be taken to increase the sense of community in low-income neighborhoods, such as gardens, parks, and playgrounds constructed and maintained by residents, cooperatively owned housing, street festivals, and small decentralized school districts. Even when these efforts do not involve youth directly, and all of them should, they build social networks and strengthen the bonds between individuals and groups.

2. Take seriously the socialization functions of communities and plan explicitly to strengthen them.

Many of the specific recommendations above contribute to this one. If we accept the premise of this paper that families and communities interact to influence the socialization of youth, then by increasing the power of parents over conditions in the community, we make communities better environments for youth. Additional approaches are less directly tied to parents.

- o Make the community an object of study and action in school. The most spectacular application of this venerable notion is Foxfire, a magazine of history, folklore, and crafts produced by high school students in Rabun Gap, Georgia under the inspired leadership of Eliot Wigginton (1985). Another example of the general approach is teaching civics through internships in local government (Hamilton & Zeldin, 1987).
- o Create opportunities for young people to serve their communities. This idea is closely related to the one above, but the emphasis is reversed, from using the community as a place where youth can learn to giving youth responsibility for improving their communities. Examples are legion: improving the physical environment, gathering and communicating information related to public issues, serving as aides in such places as day care centers, hospitals, and nursing homes, and helping in programs for younger children such as 4-H, Scouts, Boys' and Girls' Clubs (National Commission on Resources for Youth, 1974).[6]
- o Engage selected adults as "mentors" for youth, that is, people who can teach, advise, model, encourage, and challenge young people on the path to adulthood. Youth who have mentors find them in their social networks, for example, teachers, coaches, neighbors, or family friends. Programs like Big Brothers/Big Sisters provide mentors for youth who do not have them "naturally." One program, The Learning Web, matches young people who wish to learn a

particular skills with adults willing to teach them. Sometimes the relationship remains purely instrumental, but often it expands to the enrichment of both parties' lives (Hamilton, 1981). Transition to Working Life (TWL), a program designed and implemented by the Grubb Institute in England, matches adults with eight to ten youth rather than one-to-one. Staff have found that the best "working coaches" are skilled blue-collar workers rather than white-collar workers. One reason, presumeably, is that unemployed youth find them more congenial and more realistic role models (Grubb Institute, 1982).

3. Take seriously the socialization functions of workplaces and plan explicitly to strengthen them.

The notion of mentors links nicely to this recommendation because work is often the focus of a mentoring relationship, both natural and artificially created. Again the emphasis here is on the socialization of manual and lower-level service workers because most employers do in fact attend to the socialization of their executives. They can count on universities, business schools, and such settings as fraternities, sororities, and athletic teams to provide appropriate anticipatory socialization for their executives. Then they invest in elaborate orientations, traineeship programs, retreats, in-firm training programs, and the purchase of training outside the firm in local universities and from other institutions (Eurich, 1985). West Germany and Japan do even more for university graduates, yet simultaneously devote more resources than U.S. employers to socializing and training lower-level workers. To achieve both broad societal purposes and to pursue their own self-interest, U.S. employers would do well to increase their investment in workers without college educations; this investment should begin with youth who may or may not become employees.

- Find places in business, industry, and the public sector for high school students. Some of these places should be designed specifically as preparation

for a particular vocation, following the apprenticeship model, as is cooperative education (Parsons, 1987), but others should be exploratory, like Experience Based Career Education (Owens, 1982). They need not be paid positions, though low-income youth may need stipends to compensate for time they would otherwise spend in part-time jobs. In addition, employers should, like those in England who support TWL, pay their employees for time spent serving as mentors to youth. In general, employers should accept some of the responsibility for educating and socializing youth that has heretofore been assigned to the schools.

- The roles of apprentice and trainee should be widely established and appropriate programs of instruction and training developed. A West German apprentice is a formal employee whose training costs are paid by the employer and who earns a stipend of one-third to one-half what is paid a beginning skilled worker. Japanese employees begin their careers at strikingly low wage and salary rates. They are then expected to spend as long as three years learning their jobs. Experienced workers who take a new position begin as learners even when their former jobs were quite similar. It is assumed that both the culture of the new position and the specific skills are new and must be painstakingly studied. U.S. employers, in contrast, stress narrow job specialization and equally narrow training in order to minimize a new worker's time at less than optimal production. Unions conspire in this by resisting low wages for trainees, fearing that the category will be exploited.
- Workers' participation in decision making and the humanization of work should be promoted simultaneously as a means of improving quality and productivity, of maximizing flexibility, of socializing young workers to the workplace as a whole, of increasing mutual commitment between workers and employers, and of fostering continued development of workers' human capacities.

- Small-scale entrepreneurial enterprise should be encouraged because it maximizes opportunities for worker participation, is a much larger net producer of jobs than large corporations, and is more likely to provide jobs in or near the residential communities where youth and their parents live. Small businesses are often better able to accomodate youth as informal apprentices or interns than large ones because of short chains of command and informal working relations.
- Youth enterprise should be encouraged. When young people create and operate their own businesses, even for a short time, they have the chance to take managerial roles that are otherwise closed to them, they are better able to understand the economic and organizational principles governing business activities, and they are more likely to understand and appreciate the perspective of their future employers. They will be better prepared to be active citizens and to engage in entrepreneurial activities themselves as adults (Hamilton and Claus, 1981).

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Notes

1. Elsewhere I have applied Bronfenbrenner's ideas to the place of the school in adolescent development (Hamilton, 1984) and reviewed studies of schools and classrooms meeting some of the criteria for ecological research (Hamilton, 1983).

2. Given the survival of 21 as the age of adulthood, it is worth noting that it grew out of medieval numerology based on sevens, in which the first seven years were defined as infancy, the next seven as childhood, and ages 14-21 as youth, followed by adulthood.

3. Research in which I am currently involved with Urie Bronfenbrenner, Dale Blyth, and other colleagues confirms that adolescents in general see their parents as their most important teachers, supporters, role models, and challengers. When parents fill these roles effectively as "mentors," then peer influences tend to be complementary to parents'. Adolescents whose parents are not mentors seek mentors among peers, but when peers' influence takes the place of parents', it is likely to be negative.

4. The following account of youth in West Germany is based largely on the study I conducted there in 1983-84. My acquaintance with Japan is strictly second-hand. Lauren Kotloff, and Robert J. Smith have been my guides. Information not clearly identified as being from another source comes from Thomas Rohlen's excellent book (1983).

5. Socialization in Japan appears to contradict some of Bronfenbrenner's principles, especially the picture he paints of widening social contexts and expanding experiences as people move from childhood to adulthood.

6. National service could be a part of this recommendation, but need not be. Given this paper's concerns, a recommendation that would often entail removing a youth from his or her family and community seems out of place. Opportunities for all youth to engage in local service through school, voluntary organizations, and government-sponsored programs would be an enormous boon even without national service. If such opportunities were universally available, national service outside the community would be an appropriate capstone to a complete system.

Biographical Sketch

Stephen F. Hamilton is Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies in Cornell University's College of Human Ecology. In addition to research and teaching about adolescent development and education, he is involved in developing youth programs and training people who work with youth. Previous positions have included work with Upward Bound and Follow Through, teaching in a vocational high school in Washington, D.C., and a year at the University of Munich as a Fulbright Senior Research Fellow.

COMMENTARY

on **Stephen F. Hamilton's**

THE INTERACTION OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND WORK IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

by **Paul Riesman**

There is a major flaw in Stephen Hamilton's ambitious essay. He focuses on the problem of the transition from youth to adulthood in America and argues that the transition is best executed when family, community, and work are all in a kind of harmony with each other. The weakness of this approach is that if there is a "problem" in achieving adulthood it is rather analogous to stomach ache, which is not a particular illness but rather can be a symptom of one or more of a whole congeries of ailments. It is indeed likely that when family, community, and work are out of joint with one another, young people will find it hard to achieve adulthood. To know that hardly illuminates at all what the real issues are.

The first problem -- and Hamilton does not directly address this at all -- is the nature of adulthood itself. Hamilton draws on Freud's dictum that the two things a normal person should be able to do well are to love and to work. He expands the idea of love to include taking responsibility for another person and the idea of work to include "having a life's work." This is a step in the right direction, but what do responsibility and a life's work amount to? From my studies of growing up in non-Western and so-called "primitive" societies, the two concepts are best understood as parts of a single idea, namely playing a creative role in shaping the world. The essential difference between a child and an adult along this dimension is that the child takes the world of his culture simply to be the way things are, though as he gets older he will likely question its puzzling features. She will put her creative energies into play and into helping people, obeying orders, or trying to avoid them. The adult, however, not

only has responsibility for the support of other persons, but for maintaining and modifying, according to his or her judgment, the culture and the social order in which he/she lives.

This characterization of adulthood entails serious implications for understanding the transition to adulthood in America. The obvious and most important one is that a person must be actively participating in this process of world-shaping in order to feel he or she is a complete human being. In principle any realm of human interaction, including family, community, and work, should engage people in this activity; yet many Americans feel helpless in some or all of these domains.

It is easy to say that the breakdown of family and community and the meaninglessness of much work are to blame for this. It will be more helpful, however, to examine closely just why and how these conditions stymie the human struggle to shape the world. In the industrial world, as compared with that of smaller scale societies, there is a radical split for almost all of us between the system that keeps us physically alive, namely the economy, and those systems in which we find meaning, such as families, communities, networks, and all forms of expressive culture. The essential quality of any meaning is that it is a message. Meaning only exists, then, while it is being sent and received by people who are important to each other. In particular, the more important the sender is to the receiver, the more meaningful will be the messages. What makes one person important to another would require another essay to explore, but there is probably some kind of dependence at the root of the process. Important people are those we depend on for our survival, for our sense of who we are, and for fulfillment of certain emotional needs. Thus in all societies, not just our own, some important people would nave no direct interaction with those for whom they are significant. Examples would be ancestors, heroes, historical figures, artists, "leaders" of all kinds, and so on. It follows from these considerations

that our situation, where we survive by fitting into positions in the economy rather than by maintaining relations with other people, would diminish people's importance to one another. The fact that you are somebody's brother, sister, parent, or child does not imply any particular quality of human relation, though we might wish it did. I think this is what Hamilton had in mind when he wrote of the possible dangers of socializing youth "for a world that no longer exists" (16).

The crucial consequence of this state of affairs for Americans is that the important people in one's life are not a given and have no permanent existence. For any adult these people are extremely heterogeneous; in many cases they constitute an almost completely different set from one period of the person's life to another as shifts occur in job, residence, marital status, and so on. It seems obvious that the important people for any one person do not form a community. Thus the culture that they share (if there is one) can at best be superficial because it is not one that they make together, but rather consists in their vague memories from school, from the mass media of their childhood, and from yesterdays's soaps and newscasts. This collection of people is thus not one in which members can work at shaping the world because they really do not share one world to begin with and do not have enough concerns in common.

Under these conditions, Americans tend to adopt one or both of two main strategies to reach adulthood: 1) to have a family, and 2) to succeed, to progress in some kind of work. Having a family gives one, as father or mother, the temporary power to shape the world of the family and the lives and character of one's children; progressing along some line of work can give one the feeling of shaping the world too, because there is a direct connection between one's actions and certain results, especially a raise in salary. A higher salary not only makes a person feel worth more, but also gives him a sense of greater power because he has indeed greater "buying power."

The adulthood that we achieve in these two ways, however, is precarious. Both men and women feel more and more acutely the conflicts between spending time "on the family" and striving for success in their work. Raising children well seems, paradoxically, most likely to occur when the parents are not striving to shape them in any particular way (see Riesman 1983). In any case, a good deal of any American child's socialization is out of the hands of the parents (cf. Richards and Light 1986). As for success, many people sense that it is essentially hollow because they realize, if only subconsciously, that they have given up their right to measure themselves and instead allow their worth to be figured in monetary terms. The pervading influence of money on our lives affects Americans of all classes because it brings to the fore a painful value contradiction at the center of our culture (cf. Bell 1976). In concluding his essay, Hamilton suggests that many of the problems he has pinpointed "derive from inequality" (49). "Reducing inequality," he continues, "would be the most powerful means of improving youths' transition to adulthood." This analysis sees only one half of the true dilemma of American culture: on the one hand, we believe in equality, but on the other, as several passages in Hamilton's article attest, we actually arrange people on a kind of continuum of worth by means of the money standard.

Dorothy Lee was, I think, the first to point out over thirty years ago in her essay "Equality of Opportunity as a Cultural Value" (reprinted in Lee 1959) that the notion of equality of opportunity in fact implies that we are measuring people by some common standard. The very idea of measuring or comparing people with one another is incompatible with true equality. In Lee's view, and mine, true equality would mean to value people as they are and without measure or comparison. Yet all of us middle-class Americans who think about social injustices and how to right them are imbued with this self-contradictory idea of equality. It comes through very clearly in the passages in the essay under

review where Hamilton discusses the works of John Ogbu and Paul Willis (pp. 29-35). The implication of his remarks is that it is too bad that these lower-class kids are sealing their own fate by their attitudes in school and by the choices they make. Otherwise they would stand a good chance of getting out of the lower class and into the better jobs of the middle class. But what is wrong with lower-class life in the first place? Nothing at all that I can think of except the status and the stigma. Many of those jobs are inherently more interesting than many white collar or pink collar jobs. And would our society be able to get along if suddenly everybody doing those lower-class jobs just stopped and sought middle-class jobs? Obviously not. It is an elementary point that all complex societies must reproduce their highly differentiated occupational structure. While pre-industrial societies (e.g. Rome, Medieval Europe, India) could perpetuate this by means of institutions like caste, estate, and certain kinship structures, in America we do so through the myth that everybody ultimately finds the work (hence social status in society) that is most suited to his or her talents, interests, and level of ability.

In evaluating the adequacy of the socialization of youth today, Hamilton speaks of "the extent to which [family, community and work] jointly socialize youth to the realities of life in modern society" (15). In fact it may be even more important to socialize youth to this myth that I have just mentioned, for it is essential for a person to believe it of himself/herself (or at least acquiesce to it) if he or she is to fulfill his/her occupational and social roles well. But why, in fact, are these different occupations accorded such vastly different social status? Why can't we just all rejoice in the differences among them and accept them as all equally virtuous since all are necessary to society? The reason -- and here I am essentially following Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown -- is that because of the functional interconnectedness (organic solidarity) of our society, we must have a common code of justice for members of all occupational

groups and a common medium of communication between them. The most important element of this common medium is money. The reason is that money "translates" into a common language the totally divergent meanings and values of all the life-worlds surrounding different kinds of work. Much is lost in the translation, of course, which is why money is such a crude language when it "talks," but it does enable us to establish equivalences between things as diverse as a violin concerto, an office building, a bit of the Grand Canyon, or so many McDonald's hamburgers. The functional interdependence of the various parts of society, together with the fact that money is essential to bring about the actual transactions, gives money the final say in almost all of our social evaluative processes. It is extremely difficult to maintain an alternative value system in our society, though many groups and individuals try to do so from time to time.

Thus it is inevitable that the various occupations in our society be ranked. It follows, then, that to socialize youth for adulthood, in one view, could mean to socialize them to a kind of failure (cf. Henry 1963: 296-97). To maintain the unified value system created by money and the ranking of occupations, it is necessary that nearly everybody not merely acquiesce to their niche in the system, but accept the idea that, in comparison with people "higher up," they are failures. Is it their failure, in this sense, which makes the achievement of those ahead seem valuable in the first place.

This brings me now to a second major problem with Hamilton's notion of a sort of generic transition to adulthood. Given that different adult roles in our society are differentially valued, the sort of adulthood one seems destined for based on one's gender, race, and family background would have an enormous effect both on the sort of adulthood one might choose for oneself and on the difficulty of transition to it. To illustrate the point, let me replace Hamilton's vignettes of Murray and Louise with quite a well-known case, that of Richard Wright as he tells his own story in Black Boy (Wright 1945). What would good socialization

for young Richard have amounted to? Should his parents have done a better job of socializing him for bowing and scraping and for finding satisfaction in a menial job well done for the white folks? The question seems absurd to us, but we should keep in mind two things: first, it was precisely that sort of socialization that most of Richard's relatives and peers tried to foist upon him, often in great desperation. Second, with a slight twist of the eyepiece we can see that many adult roles available to youth today include indignities not unlike what was in store for Richard.

But what was it, then, that enabled Wright to choose a different adulthood? -- for that is what he really did. While early childhood experiences may have started to drive a wedge between him and his family, the crucial experience was probably his discovery through reading that he shared a common humanity with people outside his known world; if he was like those people, then maybe he could grow up to share their world and their values, rather than those of his own relatives.

The case of Richard Wright -- and it stands for many -- raises in a dramatic way the profound question of "which adulthood?" It is clear that it is a mistake to confound adulthood with the filling of any particular roles in society. What makes a person an adult, I repeat, is taking some responsibility for shaping one's world. If you like the world as it is, then that may mean trying to preserve it; if something seems wrong with the world, then that means struggling to change it. And these are by no means the only ways to be creative. In America today, because of the disappearance of community and the crumbling of the family, most people seek their life work in work itself because there at least the reward of money can give people a sense that they have value. Yet in many "primitive" communities, one's life work is not what we would normally call work at all, but rather is simply raising children and keeping up ties with more distant relatives. Thus shaping the world takes different forms in different

circumstances.

Now, what factors, in the contemporary American context, are likely to socialize youth for adulthood in this sense? Here it becomes apparent that the word socialization is getting in the way; it misdirects our attention away from the crucial transformation that occurs in adulthood, in that it refers to shaping a person's attitudes and characteristic behaviors such that they accord well with those of the already existing group the person is joining. For this reason it is absurd for Hamilton to say, though we know what he means, that "socialization must be appropriate for conditions of adult life that may not yet be known" (15). The process by which youth in many cultures are brought to accept adult responsibility for shaping the world is initiation. Anthropologists and education specialists have often noted parallels between initiation in non-Western societies and education in the West, but the point of comparison has usually been the notion of ordeal, or that of crossing a clear-cut barrier between child and adult roles. Victor Turner, in a very important essay on what he called the "liminal period" in initiations (chapter 4, in Turner 1967), suggested that initiators often use quite bizarre, frightening masks and costumes not just to scare the neophytes, but to reveal to them the "factors of their culture" (Turner 1967: 105). In other words, to juxtapose things that "don't go together" shows that normal reality can be taken apart and put together in other ways and urges on the neophytes that it is up to them to put things together in the right way.

We can see how this works very clearly in the initiation ceremonies of the Hopi Indians of Arizona, as described for instance by Don Talayesva in his book Sun Chief (Simmons 1942). After going through rites that are by turns thrilling, mystifying, and punishing at the hands of their masked Katcina gods, the children suddenly receive the great shock of seeing the gods take their masks off and reveal themselves as their own relatives. The usual first response of the child

is a kind of grief, combined with shame and anger at the deception that had been practiced on him all these years. But as the child works through his or her feelings, a transformation takes place such that he or she comes to see that the Hopi way is right and begins to participate in the masking ceremonies too.

These examples may seem very far removed from the problems of youth in contemporary America. They are not, however. They suggest a new way of thinking about what education is and should be. Given the problematic nature of adulthood in America today (and in all industrial states) we should look upon the job of school not so much to socialize -- that is literally impossible, as we have just seen, since nobody knows what a given person is being socialized for -- but to initiate. What this would mean in practical terms must necessarily vary with the local context and with the individuals concerned. I am not saying educators should abandon the task of teaching people certain basic skills and facts; yet if they reconceptualize their main role in this new way, and imaginatively, perhaps this will be a small step towards renewed engagement of youth in the shaping of our world.

Though I have been quite critical of Hamilton's analysis of the problems of the transition to adulthood in America, I find many of his practical recommendations excellent. With the exception of those concerning schools, most of his suggestions fit in very well with the sense of what is needed that I have been expressing or implying here. But I would add in conclusion that it is a mistake to think we are dealing with soluble problems. I have been trying to show, on the contrary, that the root causes of our difficulties are contradictions which are inherent in complex industrial society. The little "remedy" that I have just proposed is but a small bandaid for only one of the many sores I have touched upon.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Paul Riesman is Professor of Anthropology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton College. He has made two long field studies among the Fulani of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta), West Africa, to study their social life and the formation of personality in relation to child rearing methods. Dr. Riesman is the author of Freedom in Fulani Social Life: An Introspective Ethnography (University of Chicago, 1977), and is currently at work on a book about Fulani childhood and the transition to adulthood.

A COMMENTARY

on Stephen F. Hamilton's

THE INTERACTION OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND WORK IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

by John U. Ogbu

This is a good and insightful analysis of the ways family, community, and school influences interact to enhance or impede transition to adulthood. The historical, cross-cultural, and intercultural accounts are particularly instructive because, as the author rightly points out, they "demonstrate that culture affects the transition, not just economic and political structures." (Of course, from an anthropological point of view, economic and political structures are also dimensions of culture and reflect society's culture.)

I agree with the author that Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework provides a useful alternative to other conventional psychological frameworks for understanding the interactions among the influences of family, community, and work on transition to adulthood. The ecological framework is particularly appealing because it recognizes the importance of the attitudes and perceptions of actors in the situation. On the other hand, I think this framework is most appropriately applied to "homogeneous" populations, such as the dominant-group members of the three societies included in the present essay, namely, whites in the United States, Ippans in Japan, and Germans in West Germany. It is somewhat problematic when applied to minorities in these same societies, such as blacks and Indians in the U.S., the Burakumin and Koreans in Japan, and the Turks and Greeks in West Germany. In each case, the transition to adulthood appears more difficult for the minority youth because the minorities have historically had differential participation in school (a key preparatory institution for the transition) and in the workforce (a key determinant of transition to adulthood).

To some extent, the minorities continue to do so, and the effects of past practices and experiences linger on. The author does make a good effort, I should add, to indicate the effects of gender, class, and race, but the ecological framework does not quite capture the reality of minority youth's transition to adulthood; nor does it capture the sources of their distinctive reality.

Some modifications are, therefore, needed to make the ecological framework more applicable to minorities. One is the incorporation of a third meaning of "community." Black Americans and similar minorities belong to "communities" that are distinctive from the general community culturally, socially, and psychologically. These communities were forged by the collective historical experiences of the minorities, i.e., historical experiences distinct from those they share with the rest of society. The minority community, with its collective sense of peoplehood, transcends particular geographical locations and particular social networks. It influences transition to adulthood because it provides a collective interpretation of the experiences of the minorities in school and in the workplace, and because it defines for the minorities what adulthood means, given their history and place in the wider society. It also defines for them appropriate means and strategies of transition and the possibilities and problems. These definitions may or may not be congruent with those of the wider society. It follows that an adequate ecological framework must take into account this "cognitive community," its history and consequences, not just expanding or progressive physical settings and social networks because the same physical settings and the same social networks and their activities may not have the same meaning for minority and dominant-group youths.

The author wisely avoids one difficulty with many current writings on transition which seem to focus on the process of transition exclusively. They

imply that all we need to know to understand transition or to enhance it is the process of transition; they are generally vague about contents and forms of adulthood or the goal of transition. It is, therefore, gratifying that, in the present document, the author defines what he means by adulthood. Borrowing from Freud, he sees adulthood as a combination of two capacities: the ability to provide for one's own material needs, i.e., to work, to earn a living, and the ability to care for others. Inkeles (1968) is more inclusive in his definition of adulthood. He tells us that, for an American male, full adult status (he uses the term "competence") consists of ability to compete for and obtain a good job, earn a reasonable income, manage one's own affairs, participate in the social and political life of one's community, and establish and maintain a relatively good and stable home and family. Others emphasize work or employment for material independence as the primary factor defining male adulthood in America. As Herman P. Miller (1971:18) aptly puts it, "It is the job that counts." Without a decent job that pays a reasonable income, it is difficult for an American male to manage his own affairs, establish a home and family, participate effectively in the social and political life of his community, or care for others. This emphasis on work for material independence has a cultural backing: in American people's epistemology or folk system, full adult status means first and foremost having a desirable job that pays well. And this folk system seems to guide family preparation of its youth for adulthood; it also forms the basis of family and community responses to schooling.

I wondered why the author did not start his analysis by including the influences of the school with those of the family, community, and work. His treatment of minority youth transition certainly indicates the importance of school influences. The school, as Inkeles (1968), Parsons (1968), and others remind us, plays a crucial role among the institutions entrusted with helping

the youth make transition to full adult status in modern urban industrial societies. It is true that school performs many other worthy functions, but one of its most, if not the most important function, is to prepare the youth to get jobs that will provide them with material independence. The school does this by teaching the youth basic skills required in the workplace, by teaching them folk theories of getting ahead under their technoeconomic system, and by credentialing them to enter the workforce. Again, in American epistemology or folk system, schooling appears to be a kind of culturally organized formulae for imparting these skills and knowledge to the youth, i.e., for preparing young people to participate as competent adults in the workforce.

The ability of the school to prepare young people successfully for such transition is, however, partially a function of the people's own perceptions of schooling in relation to their perceptions of their opportunities in the workforce. Both types of perceptions, in turn, influence their responses to schooling. This was brought home to me some years ago during my ethnographic research in Stockton, California. As a participant-observer researcher in the community for nearly two years, I questioned Stocktonians as to why they went to school, why they sent their children to school, and why they paid taxes to support the public schools; I listened to public and private discussions as well as to gossips involving schooling, jobs and related matters; I read relevant documents from the local school system, from city and county planning departments, the welfare department, employment agencies, and other local sources. The information gleaned from these sources made it clear that Stocktonians of different classes, ethnic groups, and genders went to school to get an education in order to get jobs that paid well, jobs and earnings that established them as full adults as defined by their society.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE MINORITY YOUTH

In general, youths in contemporary urban industrial societies experience problems in moving into adulthood as defined above, but the transition is more difficult for minority youths. Furthermore, the transition is much more difficult for some minorities: American Indians, black Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Hawaiians and Puerto Ricans in the U.S., the Burakumin and Koreans in Japan, the Turks in West Germany, and the Maoris in New Zealand. One evidence of their greater difficulty in transition is their disproportionate failure to obtain school credentials for employment in jobs that pay well. Some suggest that because legal barriers in employment and in social life against these minorities, especially in the United States, have been removed, their relative lack of school success, their high unemployment rate, and general difficulty in transition must be due to their culture and upbringing and/or to changes in the job-market requirements. Upon close inspection, however, the situation appears more complex. Let us begin with the linkage or lack of it between school and youth employment, an important element in the transition. We will use black American youth as an illustration.

Unemployment rate is high for all American teenagers, but it is especially high among black American teenagers and similar minorities. Furthermore, the unemployment gap between white and black youths has been widening since 1955. Among black youths, the unemployment rate reached almost 50 percent in 1982, declining slightly to just under 43 percent in 1984. In contrast, unemployment rates for all teenagers declined to 18.9 percent in 1984. These figures indicate that a greater proportion of black youths have difficulty obtaining work experiences vital to their transition to adulthood.

There are two alternative explanations of the greater difficulty of black youths in obtaining jobs. One is that blacks are not as well prepared

educationally to enter and participate in the labor force as their white peers. For instance, they may not have graduated from high school or from other appropriate terminal educational institutions. Some studies suggest that black youths are not as employable as white youths because of inadequate educational preparation, because of greater proportion of them do not complete high school, or perhaps because the quality of their schooling is lower than that of their white peers.

But correlative studies turn up contradictory results. Other studies, for instance, have found that differences in educational attainment and differences in quality of schooling do not satisfactorily explain the increasing gap between black and white youths in unemployment rates. One reason for doubt is that the unemployment gap has been rising even though the educational gap has not been increasing. Furthermore, some studies show that the relationship between education and employment status is weaker among black youths than among white youths. It is true that proportionately more black youths than white youths drop out of school; it is also true that school dropouts have more difficulty getting jobs than high school graduates. But these observations do not explain the following pattern of events that occurred in October of 1982: only 29.1 percent of black high school graduates were employed, compared to 66.5 percent of the whites; only 14.8 percent of the black high school dropouts had jobs, compared to 42.9 percent of the white high school dropouts; and a black high school graduate was more likely to be unemployed (58 percent) than a white high school dropout (36 percent). Even black college graduates fared less well in the labor market than white high school graduates: among black college graduates 23.9 percent were unemployed, compared to 21.4 percent of white high school graduates. (Children's Defense Fund, 1984). There is also ample evidence that historically black youths have generally fared less well than white youths in the labor

market, just as black adults fared less well than white adults at any given level of educational attainment.

The special problems of minority youths, such as black Americans, in transition to adulthood arise from the particular context in which their transition takes place. In the case of black Americans and similar minorities, that context is shaped by the historical reality of forced incorporation into American society. That is, black Americans belong to what I call involuntary minorities, people who did not choose, like immigrant minorities and immigrant whites from Europe, to join American society in the hope of improving their economic well-being or achieving higher social or political status. Rather, black American, American Indians, and similar groups initially were incorporated against their will through slavery or conquest or colonialism. Their subsequent treatment by the dominant whites included a denial of true admission (or assimilation) into the mainstream society and a denial of means to and substance of adulthood in terms of adequate employment for material independence.

School is implicated in several ways in the special problems of black youths' transition to adult status and in their limited participation in mainstream economic activities. Historically, black youths were provided with inferior education which did not prepare them to compete successfully with their white peers for the same kinds of jobs. Even when blacks obtained the same amount and quality of education, they were not necessarily equitably rewarded by society in terms jobs and wages, as noted earlier. Furthermore, as I have noted elsewhere (Ogbu 1974) and as the author of the present document summarizes that observation, teachers and school administrators, as representatives of the dominant group, knowingly and unknowingly use several mechanisms to discourage blacks and similar minorities in the community I studied from obtaining educational credentials they needed for employment or for transition to

adulthood. For example, they failed to reward and encourage children's classroom performance, resisted parents' effort to help their children, and failed to provide information that would enable young blacks to plan for their future. "The representatives of the dominant group, despite statements of their dedication to the cause of upward mobility, (may act) on the belief that blacks and Mexican Americans were not sufficiently motivated and intelligent to improve their lot." (This document). Thus, the process of transition to adulthood by black youths is made more difficult by unequal opportunity for work experience for material independence and by school's reinforcement of that unequal opportunity. But this is one part of their special problems.

The other part is the pattern of responses that blacks (and similar minorities) made to their forced incorporation and subsequent treatment by the dominant group. These responses influence their conception of adulthood, how they prepare their children for adulthood, including their perceptions of and responses to schooling.

Initial involuntary incorporation and subsequent treatment or subordination influenced how black Americans define their place in American society; these events also gave rise to the third meaning of "community," noted earlier, namely, a kind of social, cultural, and psychological realm of collective membership and identity distinct from that of the general population, a community not limited to one geographical location or social network of individuals.

A detailed presentation of the responses of blacks to their forced incorporation and subsequent treatment and the implications of those responses for black schooling and transition to adulthood has been made elsewhere (Ogbu 1985, 1987, in press). Only brief outline will be given here. Some of them are responses to instrumental barriers, such as responses to job discrimination and job ceiling. The response to job discrimination are, however, paradoxical. For

example, in Stockton, California, where I conducted my study, black parents and community members on the one hand, emphatically said that they valued schooling and wanted their children to get good education; they even held public demonstrations to demand more and better education for their children. At the same time, however, the parents did not seem to implement effectively appropriate instrumental attitudes and behaviors, including teaching their children appropriate use of time and work habits that would help them to do well in school. In addition, the parents seemed to teach their children, <u>without knowing it</u>, contradictory or ambivalent attitudes toward schooling. Thus, they told their children to get good education and encouraged them verbally to do well in school; those who could helped with homework. But at the same time, <u>the actual texture of their own lives</u> in terms of low level jobs, underemployment, and unemployment also came through strongly, reproducing a second kind of message powerful enough to undercut their exhortation. Parents subtly and unknowingly conveyed to their children the message that the wider community of Stockton (an American society) did not reward blacks as much as it rewarded whites for the same educational effort and accomplishments by discussing their personal experiences and frustrations with the job ceiling or job discrimination and other racial barriers, as well as by discussing the experiences of relatives, friends, neighbors, and black Americans in general.

At the community level, it appeared that blacks tended to endorse collective action as offering the best chances for educational and other advancements. But I suspect that this pooling of efforts tended to weaken realistic perceptions and sidetracked the pursuit of schooling as a strategy for self-advancement. That is, there seemed to be less individual perseverance for academic success. Furthermore, these collective efforts appeared to effect the extent to which Stockton blacks as a minority community sanctioned (as distinct from wishing or

verbally expressing desire for) school success as a cultural goal, accepted the schools' criteria for success, and sanctioned and implemented the instrumental attitudes and behaviors that enhanced academic success. Also in response to the job ceiling and other instrumental barriers, the black community developed other "survival strategies," such as patron-client relationship (or "Uncle Tomming"), hustling, sports, entertainment, and the like which actively compete with schooling as a strategy for achieving material independence. These survival strategies had other possible adverse effects; for example, they might require and stimulate attitudes, skills, and behaviors that were not necessarily compatible with those required for academic success.

Turning to black students themselves, it seemed that the negative message conveyed by the texture of their parents' lives and community responses was reinforced by their own observations of the employment and unemployment status of the people around them: older siblings, relatives, and other adults who had "finished" or left school, by their own inability to get part-time jobs, by their observation of and even participation in public demonstration for more jobs, and by reports in the mass media about the employment difficulties of blacks. Under these circumstances, black students did not try to maximize their school performance. From discussion of the Stockton study, observations at home and at school, and interviews with parents and with students themselves, it appeared that the students did not take their schoolwork seriously and did not invest enough time and effort to persevere sufficiently in their schoolwork. Like their parents, however, they were emphatic that they wanted education and that school credentials were important for getting mainstream jobs and for transition to adulthood. But at the same time, they did not match their wishes and aspiration with effort. That is, they did not put enough time, effort, and perseverance into their schoolwork. Black youths knew how to do well in school

because they explained during research interviews that one reason Chinese, Japanese, and some white youths did well was that the latter expended more time and effort than did blacks in doing their schoolwork. Black youths knew how to do well in school because they explained during research interviews that one reason Chinese, Japanese, and some white youths did well was that the latter expended more time and effort than did blacks in doing their schoolwork. Black students said that they did not persevere in their schoolwork because they were disillusioned by the lack of equal employment opportunities when they finished school. Moreover, the lack of serious academic attitudes and efforts appeared to increase as black youths got older and became more aware of what the black community qua black community perceived as limited opportunity for blacks qua blacks to get good jobs based on education and ability. In this context, the youths began to turn to other ways of "making it" which they observed among older members of their community who "made it" without good school credentials. Accordingly, they increasingly diverted their time and efforts away from schoolwork into nonacademic activities. In so doing, they contributed to their own low academic adaptation and to the difficulty of transition to adulthood as defined by the wider society.

Two more "community" factors contribute to greater transition difficulties of black youths and similar minorities: pervasive distrust of white people and the schools and control. Throughout the history of black-white relationships and throughout the history of black-school relationships, numerous episodes left black Americans with the feeling that white Americans and the public schools cannot be trusted to give black children the "right education." This is particularly true with respect to black males. The black community believes, for example, that teachers do not understand black male students and cannot relate to them in ways that will help them learn. Black youths also share this belief, a

belief often reinforced by the ways schools actually treat them. I suggested elsewhere (Ogbu 1987) that, because of conflict and distrust, it is difficult for black youths to accept and follow school rules of behavior and to persevere at their academic tasks.

Finally, some oppositional elements, namely, those pertaining to identity and cultural frame of reference, seem to cause black youths to equate school learning behaviors and even academic success itself with a linear acculturation into white American cultural frame of reference, i.e., to perceive school learning behavior and academic success as a threat to their own minority culture, language, and identity. Under this circumstance, there are social and psychological pressures against black youths who try to adopt certain attitudes and behaviors that may otherwise be conducive to academic success. Such youths are accused by their peers of "acting white" or being "Uncle Toms" and are threatened with rejection (Fordham and Ogbu 1986; Ogbu 1974; Petroni 1970). To avoid rejection, academically capable black youths may downplay academic pursuits and become involved in acceptable "black activities." The dilemma of a black youth, as Petroni (1970) points out, is that he or she may have to choose between "acting black" and "acting white" (i.e., between adopting attitudes and behaviors approved by their peers as appropriate for blacks, but which may not necessarily lead to academic success and adopting attitudes and behaviors that may enhance their chances of academic success but not necessarily considered appropriate for blacks by their peers). This dilemma adds to the transition difficulty of black and similar minority youths.

I should, however, point out that every black youth is not affected to the same degree by the "community" factors described here (Ogbu 1986). There are also class and gender differences. But many black youths of different classes and genders experience greater transition difficulties than their white peers --

on the one hand, because of societal and school treatment and, on the other, because of the "community" factors arising from black responses to their initial involuntary incorporation and subsequent treatment by white Americans, including the schools and other institutions controlled by whites.

There are implications from my comments. One is the need to recognize the other sources of influences on minority youths' transitions than those indicated in the ecological framework upon which the document is based. Another is that efforts should continue to open up decent youth and adult opportunities for jobs that will provide minority youths with hope for and reality of material independence. Because of the crucial role of schooling in minority youth transition, a third implication is that greater effort should be made to promote more understanding and trust between the schools and the minorities. Improved understanding and trust will, hopefully, create more effective teaching and learning for minority youths. Finally, problems caused by equating school learning and academic success with "acting white" by black and similar minority youths should be recognized and made an object of intervention. Minority youths who do well in school, including some black youths, appear to be those who are able to separate attitudes and behaviors which enhance academic success for transition to adulthood from attitudes and behaviors which threaten their culture, language, and identity.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John U. Ogbu is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley. Since 1970, he has concentrated his research in the areas of urban and psychological anthropology and focussed on social structure and organization of minority children in school structures as well as cross-cultural studies. His current research includes school-to-work trantisiton of minority youth. In 1985, he was the Distinguished Scholar of the American Education Association.

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